

THE RADICAL.

SEPTEMBER, 1869.

THE TASK OF RELIGION.*

GENTLEMEN OF THE GRADUATING CLASS:—
You linger a while, between the midsummer of the grass and the trees, elate as the season, infecting it with your own hope and confidence, just as if hearts outside were not swelling with the suppressed tears of desire to be at home with God. In what places do they await the coming of some modern and untrammelled word, to have enthusiasm snatch their hand away from doubts, and lay it warm in the hand that offers divine friendship? Whither do you journey—into what knowledge of distrust, what discovery of deep alienation from the ideal life, what revolt of souls against their own bondage,—but also into what delight, as you see all kinds of people acquiring truth for themselves, and turning it to life! Your scholarly reverie is almost over: this alarm that interrupts it is beaten by hearts at the front, on the contested line between the body and the spirit.

Your active ministry begins at a period of great mental disturbance, which marks a passage from one position of intelligence to another. Whatever may be your outfit of knowledge, or the depth of spiritual experience which you may have reached, it is safe to say that your education passes to its most important work, since you are about to meet men and women face to face. In doing this, you face for the first time the real problems of the

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spiritual life. Human nature is learning to ask very intelligent and embarrassing questions, while its religious exigencies are the same that they ever were, and have to be harmonized with knowledge. Here you may have been taught to gauge and appreciate past epochs of spiritual development, and to note their connection with various mental states, and you have indulged religious feelings. But now you are about to discern, by contact with men in vital society, what is essential religion, in order that your service may be timely for this race and country. The past may be the soil that holds your roots, but not a ball and chain around the ankle. If you undertake to drag the dogmatic life of nineteen centuries across the face of the country, your traces will be marked by denudation of the fertility that would prefer your bold husbandry. You go forth to quicken the native germs that lie waiting to succeed the old crops, when decay or the axe shall clear the land. "Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle-tree."

Cheap publications of every kind spread the moods of the period far and wide. Their range passes through all the speculative forms, and all the emotions which the world at any time has known. The very richness is a cause of the distraction. Thought is unconsciously embarrassed as so many departments throw wide their doors at once, and display their collections. And there is no statement too scientific to resist the intentions of popular treatment. It is macerated, dissected, volatilized, put up in packages for the trapper and emigrant. Every condition of half-knowledge appropriates it. People who are troubled with imperfect nutrition will snatch, at every railway station, a gulp of spectrum analysis, primeval man, the correlation of forces, spontaneous generation, social statics, Carl Vogt's impetuous atheism, Mr. Darwin's pangenesis, Prof. Huxley's non-committal protoplasm, and the last message from the summer-land. Such a meal cannot be matched at the most indigestible depot in America. Westward the tide of empire runs and reads.

The scientific mind is making the whole world at once its laboratory and auditorium; and among the hearers there is no distinction of person, color, sex, or previous preparation. Is it

at all wonderful that religion finds herself ill at ease in this promiscuous assembly, especially when a spirit rules to assign her to the pauper's gallery, as not quite presentable close to the stage of brilliant analysis ! She sits and sees motion converted into heat, the lines of Orion's atmosphere described, chronology knocked away from under Adam's feet and fall, the cerebral and nervous system hunted down to within an inch of her life, and the final stroke only suspended out of regard to her feelings, but in amazement that she is present there at all. She listens to the proof of her functional position as the efflorescence of the polyp through a vast gradation of improving epochs. The Perseus of science, behind his fossil shield, waits till she, too, petrifies.

We need not trouble ourselves with the confusion of tongues which has descended upon theology. That is no longer of consequence while human nature is laid waste by this incursion of all the facts and all the conjectures. They penetrate into the solemn presence of our primitive beliefs, where that senate sits in composed silence. One of them, bolder than the rest, stretches forth his hand towards the Ancient of Days, and then a slaughter of the whole is easy.

When we look closely at the mental confusion that prevails, we find that it can be classified, dropping out the consideration of varying intelligence, and noting only its relation to spiritual ideas. There is a class of persons to whom the phrase, "invisible world," has no meaning. They have learned to consider that the universe is occupied with the functions of matter, and that whatever these displace is superfluous and fantastical. There are more things in heaven and earth than we dream of ; but, as fast as they are discovered, we find they are only things. This is the class that gets accentuated according to temperament, or divided into sub-classes ; such as the one whose special distinction is to derive the moral law from the combinations of birth and physical organization, and to reduce accountability to a table of probable recurrences of vice and virtue. The distinction of another is to be incapable of conceiving of a personal continuance after the bodily functions are exhausted, or even of a transformation of its elemental force into some other element.

And others surmise that the emotions of the friend, the lover, the poet and musician, the gladness that rises from the heart's meadow and sings its path deep into the sky, the profound regret of self-dissatisfaction, the hungry and eager scent of the imagination upon some trail, the music as it opens, the straining of the body's leash outward towards some depth, and down through some perspective, to overtake fulfillment, — that all this is molecular distribution and arrangement, as the nimble atoms of the organism cling or fly apart, and assemble in varying ratios to condense a protean force. Whatever a man thinks that he feels is nothing but the rotation of these microscopic spheres. His most sanguine aspirations have been only the lifting of his brain, as the increased action of the heart sends blood to make it fit closely to the skull. And when it shrinks, that is his only mortification and regret. And when he is flush with perfectly assimilated food, it is his only manliness and ethical ability, his capacity for patriotism, to sacrifice his stimulated atoms upon the bed of honor. The very words we use, that pretend to independent beauty, are nothing but the dominos that conceal till midnight the hollowness of the masquerade.

We must not be deceived by a general healthiness of disposition that preserves people, who are profoundly materialistic, in moral relations with society, and secures from them many a noble action. Their hearts are nevertheless deeply stirred with regret and vexation as scientific facts encamp before the great natural reliances, besiege and undermine them. A man will learn to confide in the unvarying operations of laws, which persist in showing, by all public and domestic circumstances, that providence is only nature's obedience. But his admiration at the spectacle of consistency does not quiet the heart, which inherited from father and mother, and from all parents of all mankind, the feeling that exacts paternity, and claims it at the hand of law, and puts all forces at the disposal of a Person. At the very moment when his mind has plunged the world into the impassive ocean of mere sequence, and stamps upon it, waiting till it drown, there is a native revulsion at the deed. He drags it forth again, to listen if the heart yet beats. He is distracted between the inexorable facts and his equally inexora-

ble hunger to regard himself as not a pawn of fate, but entitled to divine consideration by virtue of some moral and spiritual freedom, which has a casting vote, or at least an influence in framing him. He sees a man's soul entirely disappear under pressure upon the brain, or submit to a modification of its qualities by removal of some portion of the cerebral material. A youth living in Chicago, who was very dull, and showed no tendency for anything, became a great lover of music, and a player upon the flute, after an accident to the head, by which he lost a portion of the brain. Can talent, then, be scooped in or out of the personality, or is the head a kaleidoscope which need only be well shaken to vary indefinitely its combinations? Professor Lourdat, of Montpelier, suffered from a typhoid fever, which destroyed the memory of five or six laborious years, so that he was obliged to recommence his medical studies from the beginning. What and where, then, was the substance of his person? If his knowledge lay minutely packed in brain-cells, was the soul merely a force that secures their normal action? The soul either shared, or did not share, this knowledge. If it did, the total wreck of memory is inexplicable. Death might do the same. If it did not, the brain's function is the only person. And there was George Nickern, of New Orleans, nearly killed by a fall from a platform, who lay unconscious several weeks. He recovered his health and powers of mind, excepting memory. His new memory only dates from his recovery. Everything previous to that has been obliterated, and he is forced to learn his English and German again like a child. What relation, then, has memory to personal identity? We read in a foreign periodical the well-attested case of a working-man, well advanced in years, who had a violent attack of cholera in 1865. Up to that time he was coarse-grained and stolid, and had manifested no spark of literary feeling or ability: but he emerged from the crisis of his malady with a lively fancy, and a strong capacity for literary expression; and he has published a volume of poems. Can cholera, then, fortunately also induce collapse of poetasters, who already lie under suspicion of living without soul? But what is this arbitrament of change in the blood corpuscles, and deliquescence of the body's strength, which mounts with

new spiritual expressions to the brain? A man asks these questions with fear and wonder. He watches nourishment as it eventuates in intellectual action, and narcotics exhale in fantasy: he traces melancholy and self-distrust to scrofulous conditions of the blood; temper and passion to hysteria; ideas of crime to chronic dyspepsia; the vices of forgotten ancestors create the bias of their posterity. He goes to hear the two-headed girl sing two parts of an air at once; and, finding that one trunk and one stomach buds, Astræa-like, into two brains, he is perplexed to decide where the real person is, or whether death itself will be able to establish two. And if the soul be, as Swedenborg affirms, in the form of a whole human frame, how can one frame be endowed with two spiritual essences? He gathers the accounts of foresight and adaptation displayed by the intelligence of animals, who seem able to invent new stratagems, to reflect upon unexpected conditions, and make them the grounds of fresh behavior; and he is incapable of assuming a difference in kind between this power of independent observation and his own, so that, if the one be purely automatic and instinctive, why, he surmises, should not the other be? The facts assail his instinct of independent personality; and he sees them springing out of all the graves upon the planet, the only things left vital enough to rise there, and to mark those pits of nothingness. But let one open near to him, and the old heart of mankind looks down through his eyes into a bottomless depth of personal continuance. He longs against, conspires against, rages against, the facts; glories in science, and yet accuses her; gives back her level and immutable look to-day, but to-morrow cannot see it for his tears. What a country is this, that appears to smile from Atlantic to Pacific with strenuous satisfaction, as if all intelligences only cared to orient themselves through the Golden Gate, and overtake and out-time the light itself with their enlightenment! But there is not one commonwealth of the whole varied surface, over which the tracks of science are laid, that does not ache with the secret suspicion that we can only know what we perceive, and cannot touch higher than the arms will reach. Enterprise and competition blunt this instinctive disappointment, and the thin film of manners obscures it;

but you may count upon it as a prevailing quality of the times to which you are to bring the disinfectant of religion.

It is the gravest part of the service that you are to render to your fellow-men, to restore the primitive truths and expectations of religion to their place in the critical intelligence. Nothing that you can do against separate vices, or characteristic excesses of the people, nothing to refine the average ambition, will avail like this to reconcile the finite with the infinite. You step from this secluded place into a mental transition that will swallow you up contemptuously if you undertake to pacify and convert it by the old didactic methods. Such a serious piece of work never devolved upon the servants of ideal truth.

If you follow certain denominational modes of action, that relate to church-extension, and the concentration of parochial life, I predict that you will gain a parish, and lose your hold upon the vital exigency of the times. Not even if you run in debt for stained windows and high-priced exclusiveness, and borrow from abroad cathedral habits and perspectives, which are for us like an opera imported in a hand-organ, will you succeed in stanching the country's wound. What does the deep distrust of American intelligence care for your elaborate service, with a leviathan of an organ wallowing and tossing up sonorous phrases at one end of the decorum, while you vie with it in a chest voice at the other end, to declare that the Lord is your shepherd,—you will not want; or, “though he slay me, yet will I trust in him”? Distrust is not dissipated by the æsthetics of matins and vespers, even if you use them as a fine flourish of religiosity to introduce your faded sermon upon virtue or the miracles. And it is doubtful if, should you arrive at all the social advantages of vestries, with arrangements for unlimited tea and toast and clerical gossiping, for a united congregation, will much be done towards lifting the sublime shapes of God and immortality upon their pedestal of science. All the amiable and social feelings will hold a parish, like a club, together, provided you can also supply a pretty fair article of rhetoric, and, by manipulating the stock subjects of the pulpit, preserve the pews at their original estimate, or enhance them to the despair of would-be listeners. Will you mistake this for success? Twenty years of such a

popular ministry will not answer one of the awful questions that gnaw at the root of religion. America is not waiting for your fervor, volubility, or denominational activity. Her most dangerous and subtle intelligence, grown sick of that, has left the pews to those for whom texts are authorities. She waits to hear and to confess the retort of a faith that is as great as her intelligence; to have you proclaim an atonement that washes the head in the blood of the heart, and obliterates the whole discrepancy. Will you thus bring strong men to God? Then you must seek out a more excellent way than any of the sects can furnish.

The pulpit has done its best to create an impression that science and religion occupy different domains, which are hostile to each other. Nature is said to be the source of one; revelation, of the other. As soon as the attempt failed to harmonize the two by accommodation of old texts to novel facts, the ban was pronounced more distinctly than ever by removing religion into a class of emotions, a mystical inward condition, and a practical ethical behavior. Science was an intellectual reconstruction of nature. Religion was Scriptural authority conspiring with intuitive feeling. The next step taken by the representatives of religion has been the fatal one; to drive science into indifference or zealous atheism, and religion into hatred of the logical sequence of nature. The step was to declare that the logical sequence was incapable of confirming the human sense of dependence and the divine existence, and was at least neutral on the point of the independence and immortality of persons. Now religion need not wait for science to make the necessary advances towards a unity of all real tendencies. Let her take the next step. Let her appropriate the subsidies of science. They are as religious as our finest emotion, because they show the divine method and purpose by means of all animate and inanimate things. If they show this, there appears a divine unity which is expressed by means of the whole of human nature: not by one part alone, whether called intellect or spirit, head or heart; but by the whole human personality directly interpreting the whole of the divine agency, in an expression which cannot be unraveled up. The whole seamless web of a

human soul is the whole divine word, without syllables even, of which one might be science, and one religion, but one solid breath, flying through all atoms and functions at one moment, to animate and retain them.

There is only an apparent discrepancy because the men of science find the facts so absorbing. They exact the whole intellectual patience and integrity: they crowd upon the observer from all quarters with a pertinacity that has not been known before. A scientific man is obliged to renounce all other problems, and to be willing to appear irreligious while he really is collecting the refutation of his own apparent materialism. When this devotion is graced by modesty, as it is so often, and the student of nature sets to every other profession a rare example of diligence and zeal, which nothing seems minute enough to baffle, or grand enough to daunt, then we feel that his reticence upon religious questions is only a graceful surrender of a task that does not belong to him. When religious men blame his neutrality, or excessive surrender to his analysis, they ought to be reminded that the apparent discrepancy between science and religion is almost made a real one by their own unbalanced mysticism, and abject submission to the superstitiousness of sentiment.

But it cannot be a real one. The human mind is a unit because it has all the laws that all the facts require. God has made of one blood the head and the heart. They are both floating abreast upon it, exchanging signals. The capacity of the mind to classify and interpret all the facts is the finite side of the divine unity. And its effort to do this classifies religion also, strips her of many superstitious phrases, and makes her companionable to the lowest facts in the gradations of growth or the succession of animals. This is the reason why the religious man must borrow from science its mental method, in order that he may be in a condition to furnish to science his own primitive truths of religion. He will not care what previous conceptions he must modify about providence, the nature of evil, the position of man in creation, or the reality of spiritual experiences. He will be amply recompensed for the loss of every superfluous notion, and every word of devotional rhetoric,

by the richness of the material which science brings to his proofs and illustrations of the Person God, the individual man, the law of his freedom, and the continuance of his life.

You cannot become men of science, but you may learn its method, its laws of continuous development, its physical and social certainties ; and you may enrich your appeals for a pure and ideal life in man and society, and for a childlike trust in a divine paternity, by spoil from every province of the earth, sea, and sky. If science has not yet exhausted God, she has not gone too far for you to follow, that you may learn his ways, and show them unto men.

For there is in man this necessity to observe, followed, step by step, and watched, by this necessity to interpret. The earth started with it in the first man ; with this twofold unity of seeing the visible, and implying the invisible ; of noting objects, and fitting to them a creative presence. Through all the gradations of intelligence, from the lowest barbarous condition, mankind has furnished a God to every phenomenon, a moral law to every conscience, a soul to every body. The phrasing of these primitive truths grows clearer with every accession of knowledge. Museums and explorations cannot make them obsolete. The more of God you collect, the more consistent and sublime becomes your faith. It would be very strange if the acquisition of created things should reach a point where the Creator might disappear, carrying off the legitimate hopes and laws of the soul.

The fine-grained old truths of religion have been deposited by the world's best life. Its age is theirs : but, although so many epochs and races went to make them, we use them now without a thought of their age or of the gravity of getting them well grown ; like the beautiful ivory mammoth tusk, sticking six or seven feet out of the frozen ground in Alaska, which the Indians have used for generations as a hitching-post. Tribes come and go, and generations succeed each other ; but we all hitch up to the solid truths which offer their convenience, embedded in the past.

This unity of science and religion is declared emphatically by the anxiety and suspicion which have been engendered in millions of minds by the discovery that laws are invariable, and that nature, instead of being exorable, is simply consistent, always,

through every part of a man. How do you account for this deep dissatisfaction and unrest, if men are merely adjusted to perform sets of automatic actions, and can be put into a table of possibilities? Would a machine be disturbed if it had sense enough to discover its own inevitable operations? But men are now oppressed because the facts have gathered faster than the explanations; and when they turn for relief to religion, expecting that the counter-spell will be spoken from her ideal world, they are met by idle assumptions of doctrine, are referred to texts, and threatened with the retributions of unbelief. At the very moment when religion's opportunity first occurs to make the finite prove the infinite which she presumes, she continues the old prescription of church-extension, Bible-worship, claims of miracles, and conventional parish-life. Men everywhere testify to the identity of science and religion by their dread lest a diversity become established. They are sick with the deferred hope of union. Their sickness is a proclamation of the health of all the facts that are pretending to unsettle them. To convince them of this by boldly taking all genuine facts out of the hands of sciolism and newspaper knowledge, and putting them to the service of ideal truth, is the task of religion.

You will find that a proper mental method is a strong ally, into whatever province of reformation and philanthropy you choose to take your truths. It is the instrument of your enthusiasm. If you love men, and long, with all of God you can contain, to liberate them from vicious indulgences, and find them moral opportunities, you must work side by side with the men who discover the conditions of health, sanity, purity, and moral accountability. Their facts and estimates will serve you better than vague pulpit homilies that turn upon the difference between vice and virtue. Social science has for its object to acquire and maintain the personal health which develops the highest amount of personal volition, and liberates it from bad births, bad education, and bad neighborhoods. Religion should rejoice to have this practical companion for her love.

How religious the whole creation becomes as science passes to and fro, touching with her wand of order the great heaps of matter, till they fall into line, and present their thought! A well-

arranged series of fossils will furnish "sermons in stones" upon the direct creative presence. It is your province to take the facts out of the keeping of skepticism, which uses them to reduce God to a continuity of force. They are all ready to declare that he is a person of immediate and constant presence, of incessant thinking agency. No matter whether you incline to the theory of Darwin, that all varieties have been developed by means of varying natural conditions, in an unbroken and gradual series that offers no point for a direct creative interference; or whether, with Owen and Agassiz, you prefer to think that every epoch began with freshly created types, not derived from previous ones, and that the only development is in the underlying thought. Both of these theories presume a divine presence, and a personal volition in the act of creation, as necessary to supply the line of vital thinking in Darwin's gradualism, as in the other hypothesis of successive and isolated periods. All the facts which support one or the other are God's distinct statements that he is on the spot. Science cannot be non-committal if she would. When she is the most reluctant to make confession of faith in a divine person, her investigations anticipate her reserve, and proclaim that "the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made." This act of making is independent of all theories. Force cannot make anything until it is also made, and this keeps heaven close to the exigency of each moment: otherwise a constant force could not constantly create. What a body of a Creator science is unveiling to the gaze of religion! Prick it anywhere, and you draw the blood of his presence.

I said it would be well for you to accept the mental method that has definitively broken with tradition, and is writing its own Scripture. God holds its hand, and guides the fumbling fingers through the old and new traces of his work. But your business is to use it to preserve the honor and gladness of human souls. You have a direct commission to their moral and spiritual life: they must share the moral certainty of your aspiration. They want the encouragement of your own purpose to be faithful to the finest ideas. Routine would have the heart of them if it could: they long to feel the sword of the spirit slitting it to

pieces, and giving back to God his human pulses. What is this moral power which offers opportunity to you?

We call it the ideal, the soul's natural turn to be like God. It was derived from that Being who never paused during all the million years which have gone to make an earth, never lingered in a fine revery over any of the epochs, never regretted anything that was made, never recoiled from its imperfection, never despaired at its bestiality. The divine imagination not only justified all the strange and barbarous creations, but was in rapture to perceive how they led on,—a polypus that could propagate itself by sprouting, a worm that increased its family by snapping to pieces, a bug that died twice to let loose a butterfly, monstrous lizards, cold and groveling, birds that could not fly, sloths that could hardly keep awake to eat, reptiles whose fascinations were secreted by a poison-bag, and myriads of venomous insects, the whole point of whose life was to take another: these, and the noxiousness of all the periods before the elements learned balance and proportion, were the successes of an ideal that mused and planned by what road and through what shortest and cheapest processes spiritual beauty might be gained. Look at all the strata that are picked at by the scientific men, as thought, kindred to the thought that planned them, seizes the leading idea of each, and unfolds their order. They are all coasts where the divine Being arrived. All of them mark where he burnt his ships, and sought the exigency of victory.

We have a natural turn to imitate this action. We call it dissatisfaction when the present palls upon us, or hurts our sense of right: we call it aspiration when the future offers to redress the present. But call it what you will. The ideal is not an impulse that merely develops us, as trees and metals are made; not the vitality which emanates from our collective gifts. The finest soul and body, vegetating together in the kitchen-garden style, could not run up to such a blossom. But when the body plays tricks upon the soul, and the soul demurs, protests, and rages, then the spark is struck out. Let the body take care for its old combustible lumber that has been accumulating ever since the earth was made. When the soul frets at discovering something incompatible, a difference between fact and feeling, an end put to instinct and a beginning to resolution; or when an

awkward reality comes lumbering sideways down the current, runs against our shells of dreams, and crushes them in, then the imagination wakes, the creative power, — it was on board, the same that converted the mist of a nebula into the planet: it wakes to perform the same service for us, to take our temperament, no matter how crude, how thin, how feebly coherent, and roll it into an orb whose shape invents its own path, and originates its own motion through the heavens. We have this goodwill for the perfect, as the human side of God's perfections; but we should not have any ill-will for the imperfect in ourselves if we had traveled farther away along the ideal road to a point upon it where a prospect appears to lie on the same level as a retrospect, and the whole view is woven of homogeneous materials. But what point is that? It is God himself, the justifier of everything that he did not think it beneath him to create. At present, we can only imagine that divine impartiality, and make it one of the attributes which vindicate God to the pitch of adorability as soon as the mind transfers it to him.

But now the ideal is a prisoner, like those in mediæval times, who were condemned, by a refined sentiment of cruelty, to be wakened every fifteen minutes, day and night, till nature sank exhausted. Our temperament is the jailer that is detailed to do the shaking. But, when the prisoner is immortal, the oftener you wake him up, the wider open do you set his eyes, till in that width there is liberty.

I welcome you forth to do work of awakening. Have no longer a box for a pulpit: but, wherever you preach, let it be a place as large as the humanity which claims to be real and ideal, and demands a free ministry for both functions. I cannot anticipate through what forms the country will learn to be addressed; but this I know, — that souls will not put up with phrases any longer, and the monotone of Sunday will not charm. Let all the seven days rise in your message to a completed harmony. Amiable tourists of religion delight to bring home with them a bottle from the Jordan. American rivers are rolling for the baptism of Americans: scoop up each morning fresh water, as it descends, far-traveled it may be indeed, but eager to shape new channels, and refresh a virgin soil. I commend you to the divine spirit whose lips at your ear shall bid you wake to-morrow.

ON THE MERCELESS CRUELTY OF CHILDREN'S BOOKS.

THE little people are, for the most part, made very happy. To supply the ingenuity of their toys taxes invention to the uttermost, and their variety is bewildering. The doll "of the period" is "a thing of beauty," and only her frail texture prevents her from being "a joy forever."

When we compare the present doll — not the splendid millionaire with a Parisian wardrobe, and dozens of everything, but even the every-day one, dressed by the thousand each Christmas for the children of Randall's Island, and other asylums — with an ancient one in our possession, which has somehow survived the wreck of time, and come down to us from a hundred years ago, we see the improvement even in such little things.

Look at the hideous creature, with staring, black, beady eyes; a conical head, perfectly bald; the back of the head and neck as flat as the board from which they were cut, the rudimentary fingers like an ill-made fork, indicated by slits cut in the wood, with one a little thicker and shorter for the thumb, and the arms nailed on in the middle behind. She is not more different from our modern doll, with its charmingly dressed hair, or chignon, its rounded form, well-shaped hands, and pretty though unvarying face, than the contemporary New-England primer with its rude picture of the John Rogers family, like "needles in assorted sizes from five to ten," is from such lovely books as Linton's "Flower and Star," the beautiful "Barbault Hymns," or "The Story without an End."

Thackeray might well exclaim, "And, oh, such picture-books!" when the best artists and the best engravers in this country and Europe are employed to adorn with beauty these lessons for the young idea.

And, when we see so much talent and so much fine art expended upon these productions, we cannot but wonder at the careless thoughtlessness which inflicts such misery on sensitive

and sympathetic children by means of some of these very tales, with their illustrations. Take, for example, "Little Red Riding-hood." Why, the picture of the wolf in bed, in the grandmother's night-cap, and the dreadful dialogue beginning, "Grandmother, what great eyes you've got!" is enough to make a child's flesh creep with horror. We positively assert that we would rather be devoured any day by the wolf at one mouthful, than cause one-half the misery to one-half the little ones that this story gives. And the French ending, which saves little R. R. at the critical moment by the woodmen, does not help it much: there still remains the swallowed grandmother, which shows to all time that wolves do eat people; quite enough for an imaginative child. There is the direful story of Cock Robin's courtship, and his death in the heyday of his wedded happiness; and all the various creatures that take part in his obsequies only swell the agony, and make it more intense by repetition.

What shall we say of "The Babes in the Wood"? Our mother used sometimes to sing to a plaintive air the following version:—

"How silent I'd be
While I sat on her knee,
And my mother related
The story to me

Of the Babes in the Wood, the *poor* Babes in the Wood!
Oh, don't you remember the Babes in the Wood?

"How they sobbed and they sighed!
And they bitterly cried;
And the poor little creatures —
They laid down and died.
And the Robin so red,
When she saw them lie dead,
Brought strawberry-leaves,
And over them spread;
And all the day long
The brambles among
So prettily she whistled,
And this was her song:

Oh the Babes in the Wood! the *poor* Babes in the Wood!
Oh, don't you remember the Babes in the Wood?"

• Here the sobs of the audience broke off the story, and we never

heard any more ; for it was found too affecting, and was banished from the daily *repertoire*.

We object to this story *in toto*. It is cruelly trying to the feelings, from first to last,—the dying parents, the afflicting leave-taking, the cruel uncle who craves the children's money. It is best we should live to middle life before we know much of property, and that uncles occasionally want ours. We object to the horrid scenes between the ruffians, ending in the murder of one, and the children left alone to starve in the wood by the other: even the reverent interment by the robins under the strawberry-leaves is but a mouthful of consolation after we have supped full of horrors. Can it be that people know what they are doing when they bring before children's tender and apprehensive minds the sorrow of bereavement, the knowledge of villainy, treachery, cheating, and murder?

It cannot be that we think what we are about when we shower pleasures upon them with one hand, and stab them with the other.

"But evil is wrought by want of thought
As well as by want of heart."

Another book which we must find fault with—and, alas! new editions of it come out from time to time—is "Original Poems" by Jane and Ann Taylor. Some of these are very pretty and unobjectionable, and all are so well meant that we are sure the spinster sisters were kindly women, good and helpful daughters to their artist-father in their small London lodging, and never could have divined the misery they unwittingly inflicted on those they wrote for. Every poem is intended to inculcate some good lesson,—kindness to the poor, to animals, etc,—but enforced by illustrations which formed the pain and terror of our childhood.

The very first poem is a picture of the inequality of conditions in life, problem too sad and puzzling for juvenile minds,—the beggar in rags, in vain seeking aid from the elegantly dressed ladies in gilded coach, with tall footmen. Is there no other way to teach kindness to the poor, without exhibition of rags and starvation, which cause great sorrow to the powerless child whose means of help are so small?

Again this picture is presented in the dreary lines about "The Little Gleaner:" —

"Before the bright sun rises high o'er the hill,
In the cornfield poor Mary is seen,
Impatient her little blue apron to fill
With the few scattered ears she can glean."

When asked to leave off and rest, or play like other children, she answers, —

"Oh, no! for my mother lies ill in her bed,
Too feeble to spin or to knit:
*My poor little sisters are crying for bread,
And yet I can't give them a bit.*"

This is terribly harrowing.

Greedy Dick, caught by the hook in his flesh when he climbs up in the closet after clandestine pie, is not quite so fearful: but the hooking is bad enough; and the picture of Dick dangling, worse.

Then the sorrows of Grimalkin, the poor tortured cat; and, worse still, the touchingly told story of the mouse, as follows:—

"A poor little mouse had once made him a nest,
Which he fancied the warmest and safest and best
That a poor little mouse could enjoy:
So snug, so convenient, so out of the way,
This poor little mouse and his family lay,
That he feared neither pussy nor boy.

"It was in an old store that was seldom in use,
Where shavings and papers were scattered in loose,
That the poor little mouse made his hole.
But, alas! Master Johnny had seen him one day,
As in a great fright he had scampered away
With a piece of plum-pudding he stole.

"As soon as young Johnny, who, wicked and bad,
No pitiful thoughts for dumb animals had,
Espied the poor fellow's retreat,
He crept to the shavings, and set them alight;
And, before the poor thing could run off in his fright,
He was scalded to death in the heat.

"Poor thing! how it squeaked I can't bear to relate,
[Why did she then?]

And how the poor little ones hopped in the grate,
And died one by one in the flame:
I should n't much wonder to hear that some night,
This wicked boy's bed-curtains catching alight,
He suffered exactly the same."

Pleasant reading, truly! "Is n't it a dainty dish to set before" the children? Roasted mice *en papillotes* for first course; second course, burnt boy as *piece de resistance*.

The spider killed when so amiably fulfilling his wife's request of—

"Do go to the cupboard, and try
If you can't get the leg or the wing of a fly
As a bit of a relish for dinner,"—

Asked for with such tender blandishments, and the lasting distress of his widow when neither husband nor tidbit were ever more seen,—this may seem trivial and even laughable to us now; but it was bitterly afflicting in our childhood.

Worst of all was one poem which haunted our nights with a frightful image for months, perhaps years. The cruelty of taking birds'-nests is illustrated in the following manner:—

"Suppose that some monster, a dozen yards high,
Should stalk up at night to your bed,
And out of the window along with you fly,
Not stopping to bid your dear parents good-by,
'Nor care for whatever you said?'"

The vision of this monster making but one step from the ground to the piazza roof on which our window opened, and flying off with us, allowing no word of farewell or expostulation, and the dread thereafter what might the monster do with us when he flew away with us in his inexorable clutch, caused us to shake with terror, and hide under the bed-clothes. O Ann and Jane! did you know what you were doing when you drew this picture,—this hideous creature lying in wait for darkness, and flattening his odious features against the window-pane, with that malevolent grin that seemed to say, "I have you now;" and papa and mamma quietly reading below stairs by the evening lamp, never

dreaming of our peril, and coming to find the bed cold, and the place empty, and we beyond all possible pursuit? O Jane and Ann! could you have suffered for one night only what we suffered for many, many, you would have repented in sackcloth and ashes. And children do not reason: they only believe,—so that the flattering unction was never laid to our souls, that, as we had never robbed birds'-nests, we were not fit subjects for the monster's wrath.

To this book also we owe a dread of fire, which amounted to absolute terror; and when there was a fire-alarm, no matter how far off, we trembled till all the furniture rattled, and we remember having to be taken out of bed on such an occasion, and carried down stairs to be soothed, all arising from the poem, "Never Play with Fire," where children, playing at lighting straws, burnt the house down. Were we autocrat, or censor of the press, we would weed children's books as carefully as the Tract Society and certain publishers weeded their publications of everything relating to slavery in the good old times before we were emancipated by the South.

If we could have it so, little children should live in a heaven of bliss: it should not be darkened before the time with cruelty, crime, brutality, death; but should love and trust their heavenly, as they do their earthly, parents. Their own little sorrows and disappointments, which are inevitable, are strong enough for their little powers of endurance; and let their day be as their strength.

Leave to the hand of our kind Father the discipline of daily life as he sends it, and do not dare to try their sensitive nerves and quick feelings with fictitious sorrows and terrors, which, if they fell upon you in like proportion with your strength, might grind you to powder.

I would banish, if I might, all the Sunday-school books that tell of early death: life is the rule for children; death the sad exception which comes oftenest to the sickly ones with overwrought brains; and healthy children shrink from death.

"Don't be a good boy, Johnny," says the brother in "Punch:" "good boys always die." I have heard *real* children, if there be any children more real than Leech's, say the same thing. And

in this connection we would add a word as to the cruelty of taking children to funerals, "to teach them the uncertainty of life." They learn it soon enough from the death of some one they love; and why, ah! why inflict such distress upon them as we have seen them suffer, before God chooses to send it in his own good time? Really, we sometimes think, if children's sorrows were as durable as they are poignant, the amount of unnecessary torture which they bear would be equal to any picture of the Inferno.

A friend once told us that at ten years old she lost her father. Some one took her to see "the corpse," and laid her hand upon the cold forehead. She said she never forgot or got over that shock. She never could think of him again with pleasure: his memory was forever haunted with that deadly chill, and she recollected him as little as possible. She shuddered when she related it, years after. What refinement of cruelty! and yet perhaps the person who did it thought she was doing her duty.

Hitherto we have referred only to sensitive and tender-hearted children; but the harm of these books is greater to those who are obtuse and stolid, or perhaps even crave horrors, and have a tendency to cruelty. They are intended to discourage it, but really have an opposite effect on such characters. Their sensibilities are not wounded, but blunted: they often try to do the very thing warned against, either as an experiment to see if the threatened consequences follow, or from mere wantonness; and the books thus unconsciously minister to a love of mischief.

This is especially true of boys. One boy deliberately kills a fly, and coolly says, "Do to Dod, ittle fly." Another cries, not for fear Daniel shall be eaten in the lions' den, but lest that little lion in the corner should not have enough. Shall we encourage insensibility by such stories?

They either give pleasure or pain. If pain, that is bad: if pleasure, that is worse. So let us banish them all. Banish Watts's "Divine Songs," with its

"There is a dreadful hell
And everlasting pains,
Where sinners must with devils dwell,
In darkness, fire, and chains."

A friend says, "Where it is not abominable in theology, it is false in natural history." Wood asserts, "Watts is not very perfect in his zoology." "Ants do not lay up stores for winter, nor "birds in their little nests" always "agree." We forgive him for one thing, however,—even thank him for it: he made us an abolitionist at six years, by the following verse and its accompanying picture:—

"I was not born a little slave,
To labor in the sun;
And wish I were but in my grave,
With all my labor done."

The picture was of a little black girl, with chains attached to her feet,—how she could labor in the sun with such impediments was not explained,—working in the field. It cut us to the heart then; but as, thank God! we need abolitionists no more, the book need not be preserved on that account.

The poem begins, —

"I was not born as thousands are;" —

The same objectionable presenting of inequality of condition which we have spoken of before, and producing either pain or conceit.

Banish "Slovenly Peter," funny for the older ones, but heart-rending to the little ones; with the boy that would n't eat his soup dwindled to a skeleton; the boy that ill-treated his sister, and, being turned out of the house, took refuge in a cave, where a wolf swallowed him whole, the picture representing his legs just disappearing down the wolf's throat; the boy who ate too much, and split in two; Pauline, who plays with matches, and burns up,—Muir and Manur, the little cats, mourning over all that remains of her, a small heap of ashes and her shoes; the "long, red-legged scissors-man," who cuts off the child's thumb with his gigantic scissors, because he sucks it; etc.: for the time would fail me to tell of Flying Robert, Heedless Hugo, Cruel Paul, and the like. Banish "Slovenly Kate," companion to the same, and of the same sort,—namely, a little girl who told tales is carried off by an ogre to be eaten up; and other such.

But we would not banish altogether "Songs for the 'Little Ones at Home,'" but would weed it carefully. For instance, there occurs again, —

"There is a dreadful hell."

And there is a frightful picture of a Hindoo mother casting her child into the open jaws of a huge crocodile, and another crocodile on the other bank of the river swallowing another wriggling child; the verses a plea for foreign missions! We know two mothers who cut this all out. Much of this book is too melancholy, and much too theological. But the wide subject of the mode in which religion should be presented cannot be taken up here.

We may, however, tell of a story of two children we knew about, who had heard so much of sin and its consequences, the darkness, fire, and chains, and feared so much that each day's accumulated wrong-doing would make their fate only the worse, deliberately went "up garret," and tried to commit suicide by holding their breaths. They could not do it, of course; but that they tried from dread of their hereafter is a significant fact.

Mrs. Sherwood is, we believe, a little out of fashion; but we read her much in our youth, and think her one of the worst sinners in this respect. Shall we ever forget the horrid story of the boarding-school in India, where the girls go "on the sly to a ball on board ship, and die of putrid fever contracted from the hides with which the vessel is laden"? Better perhaps to die, like Gabrielle, than have your convalescence watched over by that prig Amelia.

Why is it that so many stories of boarding-schools turn on the death of one of the scholars, far away from home and parents? It is the stock in trade of these tales.

We think it a vulgar appetite in grown people to demand sensation novels like "The Dime" series, full of robbery, murder, and crime; yet stories of roasted mice, of starved children, of crocodile-devoured infants, are the same to children as these objectionable tales to their refined parents, who, nevertheless, put them in their hands without hesitation.

So let us banish all these: but for charming "Cinderella;" de-

lightful "Beauty and the Beast;" clever "Puss in Boots;" wondrous "Robinson Crusoe;" "Swiss Family;" witty "Little Alice, and her Dream of Wonderland;" dear Hans Andersen; Hawthorne's "Tales for Children," of which they can hardly comprehend the beauty and mystery; Linton's "Flower and Star," so sweet and simple; "The Story without an End," which we mentioned before, charming to the little ones with its color and its limited lessons; lovely Mrs. Barbauld's "Hymns," called by some "The Children's Bible," and a host of others we cannot name, but which contain none of the ideas we have objected to,—"banish them not thy Hany's company," but let them be the dear little ones' friends for all time; they will find nothing to shock or to terrify, but will be wiser and better for them all their lives. If people would only think what a privilege and responsibility it is to write for children, it would be better for the world; for the world in general is good to children, and much is done in various ways for poor and rich: they have such gorgeous Christmas trees in winter, Sunday-school picnics in summer, feasts and celebrations in spring and fall, wondrous exhibitions of magic lanterns and zoe-tropes and pantomimes, that they are in some danger of being spoiled by petting and indulgence; and yet, strange to say, this wide subject of the injury done them by books considered moral and useful is carelessly overlooked.

But we are persuaded it need only be brought before people's minds to be more fully thought out; and then, when we surround them with physical comfort and material pleasure, we shall not at the same time inflict suffering that they are ill able to bear.

And here, though a little aside from the subject, we would say a word as to the mischievousness of conversation carried on in the presence of children. Not only are the scandals of the neighborhood often talked over in their hearing; but they listen to stories told of burglary, robbery, and murder, which almost make their hair stand on end, and take away their sense of security. We have seen the eyes grow big with terror, and the tears stand in them, while the tale went on, and no one thought of the agonized little one in the corner, till we could have wrung the neck of the speaker with a good will. And who shall decide

how many nervous fevers, how much dread of darkness, and fear of being left alone, is due, not to Irish servants, as we are wont to say, but to the very books we have given, and the very things that have passed our own lips? In view of such thoughtlessness, and its sad consequences for life, we are tempted to quote, "Take heed that ye offend not one of these little ones: it were better that a millstone were hanged around your neck, and ye were cast into the sea."

THE ARROW.

WITH all my strength I bent my bow,
And aimed the shaft with anxious eye:
A sudden breath from heaven; and, lo!
The arrow from its course did fly.

With pain I sought, with joy I found,
The brighter mark to which it flew:
A hidden Hand the trial crowned,
And aimed it better than I knew.

CONDITION.

YOU see the wood-chopper felling the tree. The man represents a certain force, or idea, which is being applied to overcome another force or idea, which the tree represents. The two antagonistic forces are the product of the same spirit under different conditions. To state it differently, we see two individualities manifested through two different organisms of what we name matter. A million years ago, or when the earth was but a gaseous or liquid sphere with stone crust, before any animal or man had been produced, these two individualities now known as man and tree were shut up as parts of the same great stone shell, or gaseous sea, with no appreciable difference of condition, may be. From that period upward to the present, they have been moving in paths of evolution not just alike. The present outcome of all this past evolution is the man and tree. What determined the difference? Difference of condition, nothing else, we think. Spirit, under one set of conditions, evolved a man. Like spirit, under another set, evolved the tree. The lapidary holds in his hand the crystal he is about to cut and polish. They represent two individualities of organism very widely apart in the scale of development. If we could trace backward the lines of evolution over which they came, we should find them converging a little the very first step we took: may be ten thousand years earlier we might find them coalesce, intersect,—the man and crystal of to-day, at this earlier period organized alike, both in the same stage of development. Still further back, our crystal may be stood highest in organization, our man the lower.

What determined this difference? Condition, solely, we think. Had the earthquake rent the rock-stratum one hundredth part of an inch one side of the line which it did, perchance our crystal might to-day have been organized as a man. The difference of condition of one hundredth part of an inch is a wonderful fate.

A sister of mercy, who, in purity and love, spends life in blessing and serving the outcast and criminal, sits in a dungeon bend-

ing over the form of a woman, the vilest of the vile, one of the community's lowest criminals. The two represent the moral antipodes of social life. What determined the difference? Condition. The same spirit is seeking to manifest itself through each. A pin falling differently from what it did might have made Napoleon a driveling idiot. Who can conceive the change in the history of Europe that would have resulted from so trivial an event? The conditioning of each individual, whether crystal, tree, or man, is the product of the whole universe. It is the resultant of the evolution of the infinite spirit at the point where the individuality appears. Is everything so mutable? We like Plato's answer to this. In his "Timæus" he says, "There is the ever-existent, the infinite essence, which has *no generation, no change*, but exists according to *sameness*."

This we should call the spiritual foundation of the universe, the innermost unchanging spirit of each creature and thing. By right of this, each individual is part of the infinite unchanging essence. "There is also," says Plato, "that which is in a state of generation, and becoming, but never is." If we understand him, that which is in a constant state of generation, and becoming, is the form or manifestation of the spirit or essence. Each creature, each individual, is a compound of the two, essence and form. Primarily, each tree, bird, or man, is a portion of the infinite essence, which never changes through all eternity. No disease corrupts it, no crime pollutes it, no education exalts it. Secondly, each has a form or manifestation which is constantly changing, being generated, and decaying. Herein is the difference of individuality, — *in the form or manifestation* of the soul, not in the soul itself.

Through all this generation of forms, which we call material in this life, the soul, the essence, is never fully manifest. Life, evolution, is a progressive movement towards the perfect manifestation of the universal soul, God, which is the foundation of all individualities. However different the manifestations of life around us, however various the forms from crystal to man, all *souls*, appearing through these, centre in the eternal, unchangeable soul, God. Could we trace backward the course of evolution over which a Plato, a Swedenborg, has come, or that of a

wheel animalcule, or volvox-globular, we should soon lose them all in the rock-strata or lava-bed of some tertiary period. Mother Earth has borrowed no souls. When she bethought to evolve a tree or man, she did not petition the god of supernal heaven for the soul of her man or tree; but out of her soul came the man or tree soul.

Before the earth had produced tree or reptile, the souls of all men since born must have existed in her ample womb. The Emersons and Thoreaus were shut up, with the convicts of our prisons, in the same common rock crust. There are latent in the stones of our streets, in the walls of our houses, souls which by and by will appear nobler, more beautiful, than any prophet or saint that has yet been born. Were all individual souls alike conditioned, then all would manifest precisely the same life. Were all perfectly conditioned, then would each individual be the perfect manifestation of the attributes of the infinite soul. The jar and fret of life arises from the fact that the part of the infinite soul in each individuality cannot utter itself completely. Growth or evolution does not consist in soul acquisition, but in the better conditioning. Education is not the putting of thought-ideas into the man or beast, but the clearing the way for the soul to manifest the perfect truth and goodness inherent.

The possibility, the potentiality, of the perfect life is in each man and woman and archangel alike. How can it be expressed? By harmonious conditioning. All life is a progressive movement towards this. For this, the soul of the crystal is struggling. For this, the worm crawls in the mud and filth. For this, the man agonizes in pain and temptation. For this, the planets revolve. For this, the great soul of the universe works through all time. The end is lost in the future eternity. The individual soul manifests itself through concentric rings of organization; some of the innermost of which we name the physical, the social, the mundane, etc. The whole universe of forms is the grand organization of each individual as centre. What is the so-called physical organization or conditioning? The one individual that characterizes the organism as man, beast, or crystal, the central soul, is not the only individuality in the organism. As in the tribe or community all the common people centre

around the chief or king, are subject to his will in all the actions of the tribe as a whole ; so, in the human or animal body, the thousands of lesser individuals in their minute organisms centre around the one chief or head, and are subject to him. Some of the individual souls organized with me in my physical form may be but little behind me in development ; already fitted, perhaps, to become the central sailing souls in an organization like the one I govern. The harmonious relation which exists among the lesser individual bodies, which compose that which I name my body, and the *ideal* of their arrangement, is my physical conditioning. Thus, if the harmony is good, the *ideal* high, I manifest a healthy, noble life ; but if there is discord among the members of my physical community, or if their *ideal* of arrangement is base, then my conditioning is relatively poor, — I manifest but a low, unhealthy life.

I, the soul, change not ; only the conditions through which I manifest myself.

The mother bears close to her heart the yet unborn child : she is beautiful, educated, refined. From such a mother, how promising the child ! One day the mother is terrified by a snake. Three months later, she gives birth to a child, half human, half snake. On the trunk of a human is a serpent's head. The soul conditioned in that body can only hiss and writhe ; which, but for the mother's fright, might have a healthy, noble, human body, charmed the world with sweet words and heroic deeds. What shall we say of the innermost soul ? Did the mother's fright change that ? Not a whit : it only conditioned it in a measure as the snake is conditioned, or rather as the central soul of the snake organization is conditioned, so that it can in this life manifest only snake-life. Here too is a child, six years old, active in bodily health, intelligent, joyous. A little blow on the head ; and ever afterwards in this life there is manifest, through that organism, only driveling idiocy. Did the blow injure the soul ? No : it only brought discord into some part of its physical conditioning.

The next sphere of conditioning of the individual is that of society. Here also the conditioning determines the manifestation of soul. As a general law, the soul expresses the *ideal* of

its social conditioning. Take the babe ; nurture him in refined, educated, moral society ; and, if his pre-natal conditioning has been good, he will develop into a moral, temperate, cultivated man, — he will express the life of his high social conditioning. Take the same babe ; nurture him in a tap-room among brawlers, thieves and courtesans ; and he will manifest the tap-room and brothel life, — he will express, in the main, the life of his low social conditioning. Is the individual soul changed in either case ? Not in the least. No crime, no vileness, no purity, no education, can touch that. Social conditioning is the medium through which the soul speaks. The voice of perfect love, purity, and truth, at the soul's centre, gets tainted and discordant by the imperfection of the conditioning media through which it passes. The difference betwixt the wandering Bushman and Swedenborg is not of soul, central essence ; but first of the physical, then of the social, conditioning.

Then there is that larger ring of organization, — the particular position of the individual soul in the solar system, whether in Jupiter, Mars, or Earth. When the solar system revolved one vast sphere of indifferentiated matter, all the individual souls which have appeared or will appear in human form, on our planet or any other, were in the mighty womb of the solar sphere.

In this primitive stage we conceive there was little difference of organized conditioning, little difference of individual life, manifest. That part of *soul*, essence, manifest in the concentric sphere which has since formed Jupiter, we suppose to have differed little then from that which has formed the earth, in its manifestations of life, or in its individual organizations. Yet mark the mighty import of this difference of conditioning, whether in Jupiter's sphere, or that of the earth. A million years older perhaps, in his development, is Jupiter than the earth. While yet the earth was but a chaotic globe, with no tree, animal, or man, no manifestation of soul higher than that of the crystal, — in Jupiter, soul may have evolved the high forms of human civilized life.

A million years an individual soul may have to wait ere it can evolve the human form and life, shut up in a heaving, cracking, melting earth-crust ; while a like individual soul, conditioned in

Jupiter, at once with rapid steps assumes the human, — because, so conditioned, earth must loiter a million years behind her elder brother Jupiter in the progressive march of life. Shall we praise the soul to-day that manifests so rich a life, can express so much of the infinite truth and goodness, which we name Emerson? Shall we condemn the soul in the moon, that it can manifest no higher life than that of the crystal? Condition determines. Had the soul, which to-day evolves the life Emerson, been conditioned in the moon, it would still have been dormant in its stony cell, awaiting a million years, perhaps, ere it could awake, and utter its oracles.

So, too, there is that wider conditioning or organization which includes the universe. We know not what higher forms of life may have appeared in other systems. While the earth-soul has been evolving algæ, grasses, and trees, as her highest forms of life, the soul in other solar systems may have produced beings so perfect in form, so rich in the manifestations of truth and love, that our highest ideal of perfection falls far short of them. Nature is no niggard: Fate is no partialist. Does Nature condition one soul so that it appears as a Newton; while another a million centuries longer she keeps shut up in the granite rock? Somehow the compensation is complete. Does she condition one soul as a Caligula; another as Justin Martyr? Somehow 't is well.

Shall the worm envy Plato? Let the worm crawl his worm-life through. All that Plato receives is in store for the worm. Reckoning only to-day, the soul shut up in the rock might well envy and complain that the bird soaring above has received so much more. Reckoning all eternity, nature vindicates herself, giving all to each.

What is education? It is not a process of filling the man or creature with certain opinions, facts, dates, or numbers; but it is the conditioning the soul, so that more and more it may come into the consciousness, and manifest the infinite *ideal*, of truth and goodness. Would you teach your child astronomy? You may, by some kind of mental manipulations, so organize the brain of the child, that it will, under certain incentives, produce certain names, dates, or distances, as we may say, mechanically, yet the

child have no real education in astronomy. Astronomy proper is God, or the infinite *ideal* written in solar, planetary, and stellar letters and symbols. We are educated in astronomy only to that degree that we can interpret this divine revelation. For the soul to awaken to the consciousness of God as written in planetary and solar worlds, that is to be educated in astronomy. For the memory to commit and repeat all the known astronomical facts and calculations, is no education in astronomy more than it is education in Plato to be able to repeat the whole of his "Republic" or "Phædrus" from memory, with no understanding of his thought. Be but for a moment conditioned as Plato was when he produced his thought, so that you awaken to the consciousness which he possessed, then you are educated in him. An individual also may hold in memory, be able to repeat, all the botanical names of the flowers; he may be able to classify and analyze after Linnæus or Gray, — yet be the veriest dunce in the true domain of botany. Would he be truly educated in botany, he must be so conditioned with the tree, grass, and flowers, that he can in a measure come into the consciousness of the divine ideal, as expressed in the flowers and trees. The fool may tell easily whether the flower has three, five, or twelve petals, or stamens; but he must be *educated in the flower* who would tell what of the divine life is being uttered as a flower.

The boor can tell the coloring of the June sunset, in part, the position of the lake and woods, the sail on the lake, etc.: this does not render him a poet or an artist. The true poet sees what the boor sees, and something more: he sees the idea of goodness, beauty, love, harmony, truth, which they stand to represent. The boor sees all his condition permits. Would you educate him into poetry or art, you must condition him, or his soul must be so conditioned that it awakens to the consciousness of the *idea* which the tree, lake and sunset, speak through their forms and relations. There can be no plagiarist of thought. No one can purloin truth or poetry. So much of truth is yours, so much poetry yours, as you awaken to the consciousness of. You may repeat the words of Emerson's poem with no apprehension of his thought. When you come into the condition which *includes* the thought of Emerson's poem, then it is as much yours

as his. Though he may have the material copyright, you have the spiritual copyright equally with him. Is Emerson a plagiarist because he repeats the thought of Plato, Swedenborg, or Goethe? His soul, unfolding, expanded into the thought which they before him reached. Thus the thought became his as much as theirs. This is true education. So, in worship, condition determines whether you be a Calvinist, Quaker, Unitarian, or Spiritualist; whether you worship Brahm, Jehovah, God, or Allah. Give a man a fit of the dyspepsia, and his worship will be very different from that of his healthy hours. Each individual's God, truth, and holiness, is measured by the sphere of the soul's unfolding. No man can worship outside the sphere of his condition, be his profession what it may.

We can accept with little modification, therefore, Plato's idea of reminiscence, that knowledge or education is a process of recollecting, or bringing into individual consciousness, ideas which the soul possessed in a former purer life among the gods: in other words, education is the evolving the latent attributes of the soul. As in the seed there is the germ, the latent *idea* of the complete tree; so in each individual soul, as part of the infinite soul, is the germ or idea of all the attributes of the infinite in their perfection. The varied conditioning of souls determines how much of, how purely, these attributes of the infinite shall be manifest in the individual. Is the individual altogether fated? Not in one sense altogether the *victim* of fate, for each individual is a conditioning power. Each works with all to the one end. My life is the outcome of my soul in its condition, working with all others in theirs. The "Ego and Non Ego" interact.

Nero is the product of *all* souls' action through the universe of conditions at the point where Nero appears. So a Leibnitz or Luther. The jar and fret of life result from the process of adjustment of souls in harmonious relations, so that each individual shall be as a central point, where the infinite love expresses the perfect truth, love, and holiness.

The high purpose of life is to awaken to the consciousness of God within, to manifest this God as life. Education into science, art, poetry, worship, is the removing the friction, the hinder-

ance of souls, which we name evil, ignorance, and letting the soul act freely. Yet is the evil, the friction, or hinderance of each successive conditioning the blessed fulcrum, the resistant force, over which, or against which, the soul thrusting itself, its efforts are not spent in vain, but become the re-acting power which lifts it ever to higher and higher conditions.

WILD RED LILIES.

SOULS intense, free, solitary,
Savage children of the prairie,
Lonely desert, tropic sun,
Seeming exiles here among
Rock and pine and sea-mist dun.
Subtile sweetness comes and goes
Here where spirit overflows,
Rock and pine and mist among:
But these fierce souls overflow not;
And, though we admire, we know not
If their graceful alien splendor
Masks affection, homely tender.
Are they human hearts that know
Only how to glow and glow,
Telling their deep passion so?
Breath may come, and breath may go,
Speech and song may change their tone;
But these souls intense, alone,
Give themselves unto their own.

FROM THE COUNTRY.

[CARL WRENSLER'S REPORT OF HIMSELF AND OTHERS.]

XXI.

THE DRIFT OF THREE DAYS.

I.

WITH the third week, many old friends took their departure. By Thursday night, our little army was reduced to thirteen. Of this number was Mrs. Burlingame. She would remain until fall. Mrs. Perry had gone. So had the Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Porringer. Miss Ann Van Weigle had gone. She left at noon that day, with a sad heart. She had to go to get some sewing done, and be in readiness to open her school on the first Monday in September. "The fast young man," with his valise in his hand, also appeared.

"Well," said he, "I'm off too; and I hate to go,—that's a fact. I wish there was not a grocery store in ——."

The driver cracked his whip.

"Farewell, everybody," he added, shaking hands with those near him.

He went a little out of the way to say good-by to the old lady he had so much grieved.

"I meant no offense to you," he said.

"I know it," she replied; and, reaching up her hand, she put it on his head, and blessed him.

He did not refuse the small "tract" she at the same moment slipped into his coat-pocket.

When he turned to place his foot on the wheel of the coach, the driver said, —

"No room left up here."

There was a spare seat within by the side of Miss Van Weigle. He boldly entered. The door slammed, and the coach was in mo-

tion. I caught his eyes as it turned the corner of the house. Who could mistake their inimitable twinkle!

"You see I'm a goner," he said, though his lips moved not.

A few months later, I met him in the city. He laughed, and said, "There was no collision."

After a little, it seems, their spirits revived, and there was an agreeable conversation. He and Miss Van Weigle were extremely sociable. They even wandered into the domain of philosophy. He remembered and told me some of their speculations. Miss Van Weigle declared the sum of all wisdom to be this: "The main thing is to get on as we can with the present life, while hoping for a future, in which we may exist, and yet not exist."

I was surprised at so profound a remark from her.

— A mere grocery clerk! Clever fellow, but rude and unsophisticated in all the high ways of life! A vagrant sort of a fellow, with no great purpose in his heart! A wild youth, who ought to be lassoed at some revival-meeting, and made a Christian of!

Well, so be it. Take him, ye good missionary souls, — if ye are able to catch him, — and do your best. I know not why God made him. If you do, work away. Sure I am: he has the knack of taking care of himself — after his own style — in this world. I doubt not he will be as capable in the next. Wild, rude, and unsophisticated as he is, no one at the Leightons' made more friends than he. For some reason or other, his faults were pardoned as fast as they appeared. Even the old lady, who gave him the "tract," said, after he was gone, that she "loved him," and "guessed" that God did. Mrs. Burlingame softened, and said, "He was company for all sorts of people." Ermond said, —

"He is like an apple of gold in a pitcher made of pebbles and roots."

My own decision is, be he what he may, we liked him anyhow. I agree with Mrs. Burlingame: "he was company."

I now and then meet with other persons of this character. They are a distinct race. In vain to try your hand in civilizing them. They will not be civilized; and, to tell the truth, you

don't want to civilize them. The charm of their daily intercourse would vanish then. Indeed, I often think what a calamity it would be, if we all *were* civilized, perfected, rounded off to the fine curves of proper beings! May the time be far hence! The wild flower hath a grace of its own. So hath the hod-carrier his grace. I have lately seen one from Cork take his load up the ladder with a genius in his step that was poetry. And his wit would sparkle as he sat on the doorstep munching his dinner! God forbid that he ever become a "polished gentleman"!

"But," said a young dame from the metropolis, "there is something abominable about being in a *grocery* store. I think of flies, and having one's fingers all stuck up."

One said, he was gratified to hear her talk "about *being*." But she was "unable to understand the drift of the remark."

The Leightons said it was something unusual for so many to leave at once. But the house would soon be filled again. Saturday would bring a large re-enforcement. They were expecting a party of twenty would arrive on that day.

II.

The next morning (Friday) Ermond came, and said sorrowfully, —

"Margarett has also gone."

"Margarett gone!" I exclaimed. "What does that mean? Her mother said they would stay six weeks."

I found, by further inquiry, that a Rev. Mr. Sloven and lady had arrived late the night before in their private carriage; and early that morning Margarett and her mother had gone away with them, and was not expected to return.

"Her mother's minister!" I exclaimed. "She has been kidnapped by the man she hates."

I am yet indignant far beyond my power to report.

The Rev. Mr. Sloven may be a very fine man. I know not. But if I could have given him for his pulpit robe, the next Sabbath, a fine coat of feathers, it would have afforded me a real pleasure.

But he had stolen the march on us, and was five hours under way when we made our discovery.

For the first time, Ermond appeared to be disturbed. His face wore a look of grief he was unable to conceal.

We sat on the porch, neither speaking, for a long time.

The bell rang for dinner.

After dinner, I wandered in the woods and on the mountain alone, and saw no more of him until tea-time.

As I left, I picked up a copy of Swedenborg I found on the parlor-table, and carried it away with me; and here and now I beg the owner's pardon, for I soiled the book slightly, by dropping it into some murk.

I thought it a good time to indulge a curiosity I had long felt in regard to some theories of "Providence," of "heaven and hell," the great seer had put forth.

— This curiosity had been awakened in the following manner.

Some years ago, a volume of Emerson's "Representative Men" was put into my hands by a young Western lawyer, — whose characterization of it I must here reproduce, at some risk of offending, it may be, the pious sentiment of my reader, — for I cannot otherwise show the depth of bewilderment into which the young man had been thrust. Entering my room one hot summer's day, he tossed the book into my lap, and exclaimed, at the same time wiping the perspiration from his brow, —

"There! see what the d—l you can make of that. It's the d—st book I ever came across. It's one string of affirmations from beginning to end. It gives Napoleon a h—ll of a setting out, after praising him enough."

— Napoleon, let me say, was the only real hero us youths had. We had tried hard to think that Washington was the greater man because he was "good." But our patriotism was never equal to the emergency. Goodness was well enough; but we enjoyed colossal movement of mind far better.

I remember that this young man, some time after the occasion of which I speak, read — I think from the "Harpers' Monthly" — an account of the battle of Waterloo to me. As he read of the final catastrophe, the tones of his voice were sad. When

he had finished, we sat together a long while, silently looking out of the open window as twilight and then moonlight spread over the pastures that stretched on far as the eye could see.

"What a magnificent place for a battle," said he; "for a fair stand-up fight! If the Old Guard could have met Wellington's men on that plain,—ye gods! the destiny of the world would have been changed, I'm thinking."

After another pause, he added,—

"Blucher or no Blucher."

After another pause, he said,—

"I've read the life of Napoleon twenty times."

"I have read it but twice," said I. "But how one does hate to turn the leaf, and be sure once more of Wellington's victory!"

"Gods! it makes my blood boil," he cried, striking the little stand with his clenched fist; and tears actually came into his eyes.

"It seems to me," said he, "that if ever Providence—as you call it—failed to carry its point, it was when the sun went down on that field of Waterloo. It is the one crime against the natural order of things, which I, for one, will never pardon."

He drummed on the stand with his finger-ends a few moments, and then went on as follows:—

"Oh that Wellington had come to New Orleans in Packingham's place! Gods! Old Hickory would have peppered him. But, then, what's the use? It wasn't Wellington."

From Mr. Emerson's book he read to me with great glee from the 234th page,—making his own comments as he did so,—on to the 240th. I often recall with what delight he came upon this sentence: "When allusion was made to the precious blood of centuries, which was spilled by the Duc d'Englien, he suggested, 'Neither is my blood ditch-water.'"

"Suggested!" said he. "Gods! it was a suggestion that put the world on its feet."

But I seem to be writing his biography. Indeed, it would be no unfit thing to do, could one trace the swift career of a mind such as his. Bold, generous youth! what fate led thee on to perish fighting as a rebel!

Peace be his now!

"He hath slept his last sleep."

— It was in this book — “Representative Men” — that I first met with an account of Swedenborg. I confess that I found it at first difficult reading. I made but poor headway, but found myself gradually gaining upon the number of consecutive lines I could read at one time. I not only read of Swedenborg : I read of Shakespeare, and of Go-e-the, as I then pronounced the name.

It was some four years later when I chanced to take the work up afresh ; and then I discovered that much of my old inability to comprehend the author had been lost, which gave me a great deal of pleasure.

The essay on Swedenborg I have come to esteem highly, and select the following passage, which I think is all the introduction to the man one needs to have. It is also a key to much of that “deranged balance” so prevalent at this time.

The reader will not be displeased that I quote so liberally.

To a right perception, at once broad and minute, of the order of nature, he added the comprehension of the moral laws in their widest social aspects ; but whatever he saw, through some excessive determination to form, in his constitution, he saw not abstractly, but in pictures, heard it in dialogues, constructed it in events. When he attempted to announce the law most sanely, he was forced to couch it in parable.

Modern psychology offers no similar example of a deranged balance. The principal powers continued to maintain a healthy action ; and, to a reader who can make due allowance in the report for the reporter’s peculiarities, the results are still instructive, and a more striking testimony to the sublime laws he announced than any that balanced dullness could afford. He attempts to give some account of the *modus* of the new state, affirming that “his presence in the spiritual world is attended with a certain separation, but only as to the intellectual part of his mind, not as to the will part ;” and he affirms that “he sees, with the internal sight, the things that are in another life more clearly than he sees the things which are here in the world.”

Having adopted the belief that certain books of the Old and New Testaments were exact allegories, or written in the angelic and ecstatic mode, he employed his remaining years in extricating, from the literal, the universal sense. He had borrowed from Plato the fine fable of “a most ancient people, men better than we, and dwelling nigher to the

gods ;" and Swedenborg added, that they used the earth symbolically ; that these, when they saw terrestrial objects, did not think at all about them, but only about those which they signified. The correspondence between thoughts and things henceforward occupied him. "The very organic form resembles the end inscribed on it." A man is in general, and in particular, an organized justice or injustice, selfishness or gratitude. And the cause of this harmony he assigned in the "Arcana:" "The reason why all and single things, in the heavens and on earth, are representative, is because they exist from an influx of the Lord through heaven." This design of exhibiting such correspondences, which, if adequately executed, would be the poem of the world, in which all history and science would play an essential part, was narrowed and defeated by the exclusively theologic direction which his inquiries took. His perception of nature is not human and universal, but is mystical and Hebraic. He fastens each natural object to a theologic notion, — a horse signifies carnal understanding ; a tree, perception ; the moon, faith ; a cat means this ; an ostrich, that ; an artichoke, the other ; and poorly tethers every symbol to a several ecclesiastic sense. The slippery Proteus is not so easily caught. In nature, each individual symbol plays innumerable parts, as each particle of matter circulates in turn through every system. The central identity enables any one symbol to express successively all the qualities and shades of real being. In the transmission of the heavenly waters, every hose fits every hydrant. Nature avenges herself speedily on the hard pedantry that would chain her waves. She is no literalist. Everything must be taken genially, and we must be at the top of our condition, to understand anything rightly.

His theological bias thus fatally narrowed his interpretation of nature, and the dictionary of symbols is yet to be written. But the interpreter, whom mankind must still expect, will find no predecessor who has approached so near to the true problem.

One other passage strikes me as peculiarly felicitous, and well adapted to present exigencies.

The secret of heaven is kept from age to age. No imprudent, no sociable angel ever dropped an early syllable to answer the longings of saints, the fears of mortals. We should have listened on our knees to any favorite, who, by stricter obedience, had brought his thoughts into parallelism with the celestial currents, and could hint to human ears the scenery and circumstance of the newly parted soul. But it is cer-

tain that it must tally with what is best in nature. It must not be inferior in tone to the already-known works of the artist who sculpts the globes of the firmament, and writes the moral law. It must be fresher than rainbows, stabler than mountains, agreeing with flowers, with tides, and the rising and setting of autumnal stars. Melodious poets shall be hoarse as street ballads when once the penetrating keynote of nature and spirit is sounded, — the earth-beat, sea-beat, heart-beat, which makes the tune to which the sun rolls, and the globule of blood, and the sap of trees.

In this mood, we hear the rumor that the seer has arrived, and his tale is told. But there is no beauty, no heaven: for angels, goblins. The sad muse loves night and death, and the pit. His Inferno is mesmeric. His spiritual world bears the same relation to the generousities and joys of truth, of which human souls have already made us cognizant, as a man's bad dreams bear to his ideal life. It is indeed very like, in its endless power of lurid pictures, to the phenomena of dreaming, which nightly turns many an honest gentleman, benevolent, but dyspeptic, into a wretch, skulking like a dog about the outer yards and kennels of creation. When he mounts into the heaven, I do not hear its language. A man should not tell me that he has walked among the angels; his proof is, that his eloquence makes me one. Shall the archangels be less majestic and sweet than the figures that have actually walked the earth? These angels that Swedenborg paints give us no very high idea of their discipline and culture: they are all country parsons, — their heaven is a *fete champetre*, an evangelical picnic, or French distribution of prizes to virtuous peasants.

— The reader will remember, perchance, that I was starting for the woods with Swedenborg's "Heaven and Hell" in my possession. I have only to say that I did not open the book. My mind turned upon other themes, or was too busy over its own experiences to pay attention to the "deranged balance" of another's.

After loitering about an hour or more, I stepped upon a smooth, flat rock that lay imbedded in the earth. It seemed to have been planed down, it was so level, and "out of wind." Some grass and running vines fringed the edges. A monster oak o'erspread it with its branches.

I sat down to rest.

The wonderful grandeur of this old tree subdued me. My

imagination paled before this fact in nature. The branches towered and spread and increased and wound themselves in and out, until, with their thick-grown leaves, they formed a labyrinth through which no ray of light could pass. Or so it seemed. Afterwards I discovered that nature had had some assistance.

Weary with my tramp, and quieted by the cool breeze that played beneath the tree, I fell asleep. When I awoke, the sun had left the valleys. But it lingered on the opposite mountains gloriously. Who has not felt a thrill of thanksgiving to the universe that gets up such fine displays!

Turning to the tree, my eye rested on what appeared to be a roll of paper, some two feet in length, hanging down on the trunk, within arm's reach. Of course I ventured to examine it. It proved to be a roll of parchment tied at each end with stout strings.

Without being over-anxious as to how it came there, or indulging a fear as to the possibility of its being some murderous thing I had best be shy of, I unrolled it on the rock. What was my surprise to find it a document three-quarters written over by many different hands. It was an old affair, and evidently nothing had been written on it for a long time. The heading ran as follows :—

"Every one to whom this parchment is let down is expected to write hereon something suggestive of his or her mood at the time. Be brief, and be economical in space."

"'Let down'! What humbug is this?" said I.

But the daylight was flying fast, and I was interested to read what was written. There were both prose and verse.

My eye was first attracted by the following, that was written in a bold hand just underneath the heading already quoted :—

THIS ROCK.

From azure, star-set sky,
His Lightning fierce did fly,
While rolled the pealing Thunder,
Nor smote this Rock asunder.

The Radical.

Uptorn, the Elm-tree lay,
And grieved its life away ;
But of its ample dust
Upsprang this Oak robust.

Falleth the cheering rain
And sun through years of gain ;
And now this rock-bound Tree
Hath He ordained to be

A Refuge for the weak.
The deaf and dumb, who seek
To learn in vain alway,
List here what His winds say.

And He alway doth ask
Of every one his mask.
He saith unto the crowd,
" Wroth am I with the proud.

" Take heed, if ye have eyes ;
For vision swiftly flies.
Your eyes give unto me,
If ye would clearly see.

" The Single-eye is clear
Of mote or beam."

Nor fear
To heed this warning voice
Who hast no *second-choice*.

This, being quite legible, I soon copied it.

It then occurred to me that I might as well run off with the parchment, and examine it at my leisure. Without a second thought, I was on my way down the mountain. As I neared the house, I concealed my prize under my coat, passing those I met on the porch with a gracious " Good-evening." Once in my room, I deposited it under the pillows of my bed, and made myself ready for tea.

Ermond was not at the table.

A piece of toast and a cup of tea soon disposed of, I returned to my work of copying, leaving the table in some amazement at my sudden departure.

Why I copied more, I don't know, since the original docu-

ment was safe in my hands. But it seemed a matter-of-course thing to do, and I brought to my aid the poor little flickering oil lamp I had hitherto quite despised.

I copied at random, without even reading in advance.

The following having an odd look, I put it down first, it purporting to be "A Talk with the Oak."

— When were you last an acorn?

— A hundred years ago.

— Oh, my! a hundred years!

No response.

— Well, you've grown some this century, as well as the rest of us.

— No trouble.

— I thank you, nevertheless.

— You need not.

— Oh, well, then, what is your opinion of things?

— Yes.

— That was what you said, — yes; but what does "yes" mean?

— Everything.

— Ah, well, then: now you've told me everything, I thank you.

— You need not.

I did not see that I could say more. But, after a little, I said, by way of sport, —

— Did you ever know one Ben Franklin?

— He ate a loaf of bread where you sit.

— Oh!

Laughing, I looked about me.

— What dost thou seek?

— A morsel or two: I guess his appetite —

The tree shook its branches. An acorn thumped me on the head.

— Possibly you saw something of one George Washington?

— Washington and Franklin were once conversing here together.

— Oh! they were, were they? And they ate the bread together? that's why no morsel's left.

— Washington brought his flask of wine.

— Did Benjamin ask him to sign the pledge?

A shower of acorns was the tree's reply.

— Well, then, what *did* the codgers say?

— Irreverent ribald! The "codgers" said much that was to the purpose. When they rose to take their leave, they bowed their heads before me. Franklin said, —

"*There shall more things come on earth than the earth dreams of.*"

"SO BE IT," said Washington, drawing his sword.

Other questions I asked, but there was no response.

As I come to assort these bits of—"moods," shall I call them?—I am not a little interested. I am much piqued to speculate on the kind of persons I am thus brought into spiritual *rapport* with.

For instance, what of the person who wrote the following?—

O wond'rous Earth whereon I dwell !
Erewhile I rove o'er thy dark breast,
More sights I see than I will tell
To the sweet heaven when in its arms I fall to rest.

O wondrous Earth ! thou'rt not to me
The fairy tale I once read o'er,
In that far realm I used to be
Ere I came through thy just-ajar, forbidden door.

I wander here a soul bereft,
Like one forlorn, seeking a home
Where all are passing, none are left, —
O wondrous Earth ! — I will go hence, and no more come.

I will leave the reader in the same blissful ignorance, as regards the above complaint, I am in myself.

Here, I should judge, are mystic verses of some skeptical or perchance jilted spirit :—

Love I saw up here escaping :
Swift I left the valley low,
And, all-fleet, I here alighted,
Mid the splendors of a bow,

That, with heavenly promise arching,
Spanned the gulf lay broad between.
In that hour mine eyes were opened,—
Love nor bow have I since seen.

Here is a triplet some one perchance will appreciate :—

Love is the fire
Melteth the heart,
Till it desire
No separate part.

Flowing as one,
Love guards the right :
Like the bright sun,
Its path is light.

Who doth oppose
Its maddened course,
Him it o'erthrows
With fiery force.

Underneath this was written as follows :

I could sing another song of fiery love.
Is love alway the blessed light above ?
Oft burns o'er the heart, yet leaves least spark
Aglow, left there to make the darkness dark.

Here is a sonnet ; and the three verses following were in the same handwriting.

I sprawl upon this Rock beneath the Oak-tree,
And take my rest. I climbed here from a town
Where dwell my kinfolk brave. Surprise doth forsake me,
Here. From this seeming height now looking down,
I see spread o'er the fruitful Valley's cheek
Her tell-tale praise of Man. His wit, to me,
Doth more of Nature's loftly grandeurs speak
Than pulseless Rock or lordly branching Tree.
Though it be heresy to write this here,
I still will write : His free thoughts farther run,
And sport themselves in skye vaults more clear
Than those that daily welcome yon proud sun.
Does Earth work wondrous well in grooved blind Law ?
He wrought ere Earth or Sun the other saw.

Let Nature not too curtly ask,
"What of this fellow wand'ring here ?"
I Am! but thou, O Nature vast,
Must cease. Of dying, *thou* need'st fear.

The Radical.

My Spirit free — lord of itself —
 Can oft create itself anew ;
 But thou, O Nature-cast-in-mold,
 Canst never take a higher view.

I do not mock thee with a boast :
 For thy great beauty's sake, I still
 Do honor thee ; and thou in me
 Survivest, — please my sovereign will.

The following might be set down to the credit of one of Mrs. Burlingame's transcendental friends : —

'T is well the Sphinx is dumb :
 Her speech would wake the drowsy air,
 The stars would their old orbits change,
 And sun and moon as wildly range,
 And chaos come,
 Did she her Mind declare.

The following might have had a similar parentage : —

Bowed 'neath Fate's too heavy hand,
 Thy spirit broken with the rod ?
 Pray use thy might ; possess the land !
 Art thou not Fate's destroying God ?

The following I commend heartily to the attention of all. Such a providence I like to have confessed. For a long time I have been a little weary of hearing of the "angels," and of a "tender loving father." The facts do not invite to so great a working-up of the sentiment.

A Man was formed. The angels said,
 "He hath not where to lay his head."
 And soon they brought a pillow soft
 From their sky-home, the stars aloft.
 The Child-man slept, nor did awake.
 Whole eons passed. And God said, "Take
 The pillow soft away." Sore wept
 The angels, then. "How he hath slept !"
 Said they. "No more can slumber sweet
 His eyelids hold. His weary feet

Will wander o'er the burning earth,
And he will rue his day of birth."
"He will e'en so," God stern replied.
The angels bowed, and, turning, sighed.
"He will e'en so," once more God said ;
"But I will gain a wiser head."

A proper foil for the above may be found in the following,
written in a lady's hand :—

Our reliance is not on God as against impending calamity, but as
over and superior to it. The calamity will come ; and it is real. It is
within our power to rise above it, and even to reap a benefit from it ;
but to affirm that it comes of itself, as a blessing, is to affirm that black
is not black at all, but even whiter than white.

Here are a few lines that have something of the same flavor :—

Ye sons of men, give ear :
The angels waft good cheer.
Blame them no more, nor grieve.
With winged flight they leave
Ye to the hap yourselves decree.
Now live or die, for ye are free.

Several bits of prose I copied.

It is worth living to be of worth to others, if not to ourselves.

I would reverse the order of the above. It is worth while for me to
live, though of no worth to any but myself.

I would add,—

If I for self have truth for worth,
I shall escape through all the earth.

I am glad to be here this breezy morn. I remember such as are at
home in the hot city. I contrast the simple amplitude of nature with
all that man has achieved in procuring for himself the luxuries of civili-
zation.

From here to the city of ———, it is three hundred miles, say.
How long will it take civilization to reach this point? .

May its march be slow!

I would not have a train of cars running up this height for the world!

How many poor souls are crowded into the cities, living in garrets and cellars, eking out their distressed lives! How blessed would this pure air be to them! How delightful yonder sunset! Surely I think their ill-fortune here must be made up to them in some world beyond.

How falls the shadow o'er their joyless lives!
How it spreads far, and deepens to the end!
No tale of their great sorrow long survives,
Nor much their generation's chance doth mend.

I think it would be well for one who believes himself to be flourishing in the city to come here alone, and ask himself, "What am I worth?" Those things he is possibly laying the most stress upon as valuable, for which he is giving a life's whole energy, might from some cause, in his absence, disappear from the face of the earth. What if this misfortune had fallen to him? Would not he himself be worth precisely as much as before? Not worth as much, perhaps, as when he began to accumulate his wealth; for then he was fresh, and in some measure equipped to increase his personal value. It depends on whether he has made his business serve him, or whether he has served his business: does it not?

On reading the above, I am made aware, for the first time, of my poverty. I live in the town of ———, and am "worth" one hundred thousand dollars.

If I had your hundred thousand dollars, I would not be poor very long.

Oh, but you would, my dear friend, if you are poor *now*.

He who detects a law has thereby taken hold of Wisdom. Happy for the world, did it heed this simple truth. But the world will not heed. It rather take its momentary ease on the surface with a guess than dive or dig for a basis of enduring peace.

The invisible is real. Those things our eyes behold are shadows.

I have observed with pain, in looking over the various inscriptions on this Rock, that the name of the blessed Jesus does not once occur. Have no Christians wandered hither? Or have they left their Saviour behind, forgetting him?

Let me remind all comers to this Pagan Rock, that Jesus said that *this* world was unworthy of your love. But he would show you the way to another world if you would believe on him, where the redeemed of earth shall dwell with him forever in glory.

It is my opinion that no man has been more defamed by his ignorant disciples than this man, Jesus of Nazareth. In the above case, for instance. How idle is this talk about "another" world! that is, another planet. Our earth is "another world" to every other earth. If Jesus could convey all the "believers" from this earth to some other place, what of it? Would they be other than what they were when they set out on the journey?

I would remind all comers to this Rock, that the worlds are all alike, and are convertible into heaven or hell at the pleasure of the souls which inhabit them.

And, further, this is the proper situation of affairs. Man must construct his own paradise, or he is unfit to dwell in one. By creating one outwardly, he perfects one inwardly. Thrust into one before his time, his fate is ordained of God.

Mock saints in Eden tire and faint;
 And ill they bear their Lord's restraint.
 All pure without, impure within,
 They long to test the fruit of sin.
 Their freedom is so dear a thing,
 They'll suffer with it any sting.
 Give them to keep an Eden rough, —
 They'll make it blossom soon enough.
 'Fore Eden fine, thou, gracious Lord,
 Best keep alway the flaming sword!

Here I rested.

I heard the clock strike nine, and thought I would copy no more until the next morning. Hastily gathering up the scraps I had written, I placed them in the stand-drawer; but the parchment I left rolled up on the top of the stand.

I found Ermond on the porch below.

He received me cordially.

The sight of him recalled to mind the flight of Margaret.

"Any news of Margaret?" I asked.

"None," said he.

I looked about. The porch was well-nigh deserted. The parlors were quite so, and only one of them was lighted. One might have guessed that a funeral ceremony had that day taken place there.

But the heaven, as I looked off the porch, wore its unchanging glory. Space—space—and stars; and a full moon just over the horizon's edge! A vision of splendor not within my grasp.

A lonely cricket had found its way into some sheltering crevice near by. His note was cheery; but a touch of sadness there was also in it.

The low but steady whirr of the melancholy frogs—

Pshaw!

I sat down, abashed and silent, before Ermond.

"As far," thought I, "as the heavens are above the earth,—so far his thoughts from mine! He is not ever saying, 'How delightful!' or 'How miserable!' 'The melancholy whirr of the frogs'! I am glad I did not think that aloud."

I found that Ermond gathered his gloom from a widely different source. Perhaps I should not speak of it as gloom at all. It was really but a deeper tone of seriousness holding the natural freedom of his manner somewhat in check. But he was serious not over his own lorn fate. Margaret's disappearance had been the occasion of his taking a long and thoughtful gaze at the problem her career and fate involved. But he shall—as I can report him—speak for himself.

After a few pleasant words on other subjects, he said,—

"I think of Margaret as the representative of a class, not merely as a single soul. My interest in her as an individual is not lessened by this fact, but rather increased. For what now is equal to her safe return to a tranquil destiny will suffice for all. Her class is large,—no one can tell how large. We have met her under favorable circumstances to learn of her first awakening wonder at life. This wonder, of course, we all share

more or less at her age. Perhaps most of us forget it a little farther on ; lose it in the whirl and scramble for mere bodily existence. It is profaned. The priests have taken possession of it to earn their livelihood ; or, from most minds, it passes, and gives place to a discolored reflection of itself through the prism of a degraded intellect. But wonder ! wonder at life ! I suppose that even God is not simply a first-class mechanic. That *life* is an *enigma* to God, I fully believe. If it were not, he would be a monster in my thought. If this wonder did not remain, I should say the day of doom would appear, and suddenly. If there be a God to whom we are all-related, that likeness subsists on wonder alone. There is this common dependence ; this secret which omniscience does not penetrate. The wiser we are, the profounder life's mystery. It is the poetry of our being. A bitter-sweet that gives a twinge to life, that makes it enjoyable. It is the pique that puts an edge on the world or the universe, that spheres the whole, and keeps all things from flattening out.

"The Lethe of nature
Can't trance him again,
Whose soul sees the perfect,
Which his eyes seek in vain.

The Sphinx can neither answer her own question, nor get answer from man. It is with her as it is with him.

"Thou art the unanswered question :
Couldst see thy proper eye,
Alway it asketh, asketh ;
And each answer is a lie.
So take thy quest through nature ;
It through thousand natures ply :
Ask on, thou clothed eternity, —
Time is the false reply."

"Do you think Emerson's poems are poetry ?" I asked.

"Most of the critics say otherwise ; but I think he has written the only poems of modern times. The one in which the above lines occur must live with anything the great Shakespeare, even, has produced. It is itself a 'clothed eternity.' Shakespeare is grand, but he marches only as a monarch amid his subjects, and shows them as they are ; wonderful in his interpretations of what

we call human nature ; his eye as clear as a sunbeam,—a shot that never misses the mark of its high calling : but this wonder of life he knows little of ; the invisible, the inexpressible, the unattainable, yet that which preserves the soul of the world,—with this he does not deal. He is not one—

“ Whose soul sees the perfect,
Which his eyes seek in vain.

His eyes find all they seek ; and he is content, as well he may be, as one who walks only upon the earth. Here he has no rival. But, is he the great poet, the poet of the soul ? ”

“ Emerson himself places Shakespeare on the throne as lord of all, and crowns him with all manner of majestic phrases.”

“ The Emerson who talks thus, and the Emerson who wrote the poems, are two persons. Or, perhaps the gods, as we mortals, look from home to behold what is truly great, and have the world’s dust thrown in their eyes.”

“ Possibly.”

“ I doubt if Shakespeare esteemed his own plays as highly as the world has since.”

“ He probably believed they were great while he was writing them.”

“ I dare say. But as for Emerson and his writings, I think that those who profess to esteem his prose as much superior to his poetry, and sometimes say that his prose is the best poetry of the two, are wide the mark. Compared with his poems, his essays, admirable as they are, appear to me as the outcome of one who was experimenting at his trade. They are always edifying and quickening,—not one that I know of which it would not be well to read. But most of them are uneven in their merits. A few of them have their gaps of good commonplace where he appears to attempt to be logical, as are the rest of mankind. He tries to state the case plainly, and falls from the centre, so to speak, out upon the surface, where, of course, he must sprawl like other unfortunates. There has been passed about a story to the effect that he keeps a note-book in which he jots his daily experience ; and, when he has to prepare an essay, he strings these jottings together : thus we get, for result, essays which are without order, and might as well be

read backwards as forwards. I discredit the story. The essays he has printed are not made up in any loose fashion of that sort. That he keeps the jottings of the day, and uses them, is very likely true. But he fits them to their place, nevertheless. I don't suppose he makes a 'skeleton,' and then fills in as men of great talent can do so wonderfully. But the scope of the whole must come before his mind, and he must see the progressive steps; but it comes as a vision, and he has the rare genius which holds the vision until it is pictured in words. His essay on 'The Poet' describes the working of his own mind. He 'sees and handles that which others dream of.' He makes that his *business*; and undoubtedly he states his own experience in saying, 'Homer's words are as costly and admirable to Homer as Agamemnon's victories are to Agamemnon.' His neighboring farmer, sweating at his plow, undoubtedly believes that to hold a pen and write a poem is a little thing to do. But, while he is sweating water, the poet is sweating blood. So another man, laboring with his 'points,' undoubtedly believes himself to be the great worker. If his 'points' were not likely to disappear the day after they were made, one would feel a greater interest in them. But all forget, or have never known, that the greater part of the poet's time is under pawn to the Muse. The *Muse*, I suppose, is to most minds a fiction they think of with a grin. The poet waits in seeming idleness, which is no pleasure to him, but sternest of tasks. He would rather chop wood or drive oxen by the month. Yet there he is, bound over to keep the peace, and is not permitted to fill up the interval with wood-chopping or oxen-driving. His God is a jealous God, and tolerates no worldly economy. Besides, the knowing choppers and drivers would laugh if he were among them to play work, or resent the indignity put upon their vocation. Emerson has his own defense, —

"Yet do not I implore

The wrinkled shopman to my sounding woods,
Nor bid the unwilling senator
Ask votes of thrushes in the solitudes.
Every one to his chosen work:
Foolish hands may mix or mar;
Wise and sure the issues are.

"I think Emerson's essays are incomplete poems. But that they are merely strung together, and without method, I discover, the more I study them, to be untrue. They are to be studied, or rather dwelt with, in order to receive a correct impression of them as a whole. I heard the author of some fine papers on 'Wilhelm Meister' say that he read the work carefully four times, the last time taking it with him on his summer vacation; and then the import of the great artist opened to him for the first time. It is the fault of every age, perhaps, of our age certainly, that we expect to pocket the revelations of the gods while on the wing, — own them without effort by just paying a few dollars in exchange. Those who see no order in the essay on 'Spiritual Laws,' in that on 'The American Scholar,' — not to mention others, — have not done their author the justice he is entitled to. This, however, is true: the order is not explained to you; he does not say, 'I divide my subject so and so, and treat first of,' etc., — he does not tie his sentences together with little familiar odds and ends which have a significance in the 'popular mind.' His order is over, or underneath mere expression; yet there is expression adequate to show you where the path of thought lies, and to afford you the delight, too, of winning your way.

"But it is in his poems that the genius of Emerson finds just play, and honors itself most. In these his philosophy is to be found in free outline. Here it is not hampered with details: it is aglow in an atmosphere of wonder. It is the *realism* of the spirit, and not of brick and mortar. He exposes the invisible order by illuminations. One says, 'Here is one who honors the spirit, the fact of being; but says, What business have I to measure it? I will only sing of it.'

"I have never seen a review that conceded to his poems the rank I would give them. I could not pretend to sit in judgment on them, and state their values. I only know that they are of that nature one can only say their significance cannot be measured. They are not the universe boiled down into portable shapes of rhyme and metre; they are rather so many divine musical keys, not to be handled, and which even the poet himself will probably never know the full worth of.

"But I have in mind chiefly his earlier poems. The second book falls below the first. The same is true of his essays. If you want the best of the man, you must look into his first books. In these days he appears to be charming the populace by doing his work over again with some heed to *their* endowments. Of course he is feted and praised and understood, and it is a very gracious thing for him to do. He seems to have caught a little of the worldly fervor, and smiles on our new 'era of good feeling' benignantly. One might say, 'He has become his own mediator.' I confess that the pleasure he gives the crowd to-day is contagious. It would seem cruel to say he ought not to do so. And then, again, I don't think he is himself quite conscious of falling under the severe tone of his youth. Indeed, he has held out wonderfully. And, in a country like ours, his success in this respect is nigh a miracle. But one reads his recent speeches at the reform meetings, and is a little confused, and asks, 'Is he the same who wrote the "Ode" inscribed to Channing?' With his friends about him, and his troops of admirers, and the restless energy of the daily multiplying reforms to supplicate him, it is not surprising if he has a kind word for all. His behavior towards the world may indeed be called 'more democratic,' but it is by condescension from his own orbit that he takes the laurel. If it serves the temporary conceit of the time, future ages will overlook all, and see only what is already secured.

"No youth or maid will lessen his or her faith in the high song of the soul because of any delinquency flesh and blood may be heir to. That faith is not the sport of one representative; is not disturbed by the success or failure of any. It is the unfailing bank; is solvent, and ever remains to all."

"To Margaret?" said I, by way of reminding him of her.

"Yes. I had not forgotten her. She belongs to all I have said. How great is her sense of what we call *destiny*! It is the peculiarity of her condition which lends especial attraction to her now. She is one of a large class of womankind who has awakened to a sense of personal worth in this present time. Too young to be tempted by the honors and advantages of political privilege, of her own accord she touches reverently

the hem of the garment of being itself. When she asks, 'Why am I here?' she is not to be put off with a code of relations and duties to her fellows. All that is proper, and seems easy, as a sentiment, to children of the day. But she has already seen that destiny is not to be bounded by years on this earth, nor by time hereafter. Her horizon has lifted. She will do her duty to the world by dwelling in a state which no world bounds. She sees there is an illusion to all appearances; but that life itself, when one touches it, must have a realness to it that shall never cease to satisfy. Though one beholds it in wonder forever, it retains its charm and its service to mankind.

"If Margaret is able to hold this vision now opening to her eye until she is rooted in the soil of it, she will have solved the 'woman question,' and every other question, for her own peace. She will have placed a true estimate on the nature of things here. She will be the most *practical* of all mortals, by reversing the rule which turns men and women into busy-bodies for their own and their neighbors' salvation. I would have her write over every path that leads to her door, 'None enter here to do me good, or to fret.' And, whether written elsewhere or not, she should act as though it were blazing at every corner. Only the vulgar would mistake her, and ere-while the reason would dawn and illumine their dullness.

"I do not preach asceticism, and no good outcome for the needy world. The fair regard for the one leaves open-door to the other. But this is what I see: society expecting of individuals tasks—of affection and help, shall I say?—and offering these back in its turn, when the whole performance is but the drawing of water from empty wells. The grand fuss and disturbance we witness comes of this fact: nobody is satisfied, for nothing is received. Whosoever drinketh of the waters of life he shall never thirst again. I think that was a fine insight."

(My report of all this part of his conversation is necessarily very imperfect. I find myself crippled by an inability to do his doctrines justice.)

"But what will become of Margaret under the influences she is subjected to by her mother?" I asked. "Will she ever get through her prison walls?"

"I think she has a gift of thriving on adversity: neither her mother nor Mr. Sloven can stand greatly in her way. There is a determination of character manifest in her which will be apt to hold out against whatever odds."

III.

The next morning we went to the village, a distance of eight miles or so. We met a well-dressed lady, of some forty years, walking leisurely along. At the moment, her attention was taken by a train of cars passing over the high trellis-bridge not far off. Somehow she tripped, and fell forward, and down a little pitch. My impulse was to rush up, and take hold of her, at once. But Ermond said, —

"Wait."

She was quickly on her feet again, and apparently not at all injured.

We passed on without a pause or perceptible recognition of her misfortune.

"Did you observe," said he, "that the lady would have been annoyed had we interfered?"

"No," I replied. "I observed only that she fell down, and got up; and we failed to ask if she was hurt. It strikes me it would have been polite to have said or done something."

"There are people who are chagrined to meet with an accident. They prefer not to have the affair mentioned, and wish to forget it. I respect this pride. I would not appear to notice their mishap. When they find they can help themselves, they are glad of it. There are others who would rather be tortured than not have an excuse for a scene; who fall down on purpose that you may pick them up. If by good luck they chance to break a leg, they are happy; for they have you in their power, and may demand all sorts of attention. I am slow to come up to the help of either class. Both are helped most by being left alone."

"How do you know," said I, "but that that lady has severely injured herself, and is at this moment in great need of help?"

"I perceived she did not ask for help by the first movement she made."

I looked back, and saw her moving up the hill with her parasol above her head,—yet gazing at the cars, which, for some cause, were standing still.

"True religion," said he, "consists in letting the fatherless and widows have a fair chance to help themselves. People who believe in God do not seem to remember that he never yet went out of his way to help any part of the world up or on."

"He leaves that for ourselves perhaps: we are to help each other."

"True; but it is a great mistake when we substitute our methods for the wise God's. In other words, we cannot be too much on guard against giving offense to the self-reliant spirit all cherish and respect in some degree: the brave should not be insulted; the cowardly should be stung to effort. Have respect for this spirit. In one person's case, you honor him because he respects it, and possesses it: in another's, you pass him by, to do the same spirit reverence."

"Yet what a vast multitude there are with pride enough, but without ability to help themselves!"

"This multitude is not so great as you with others suppose. Place nine out of every ten in desperate situations; cut off their hope that some foreign aid will arrive,—and see what miracles of salvation they will perform. Few people are so placed; yet they should act as if they were. The gods help such as help themselves. We bear each other's burdens when we bear our own. The least thing we do to render ourselves not a burden to others has the virtue of a great benefaction: it liberates all others for a higher service than attending on our ills can possibly be."

"There are those whose whole pleasure consists in going about doing good."

"Yes: but it is a pleasure they should oftener deny themselves of. Good souls they are; but they foster weakness and imbecility in the world, which is an evil."

"That is a comfortable doctrine for the world to hear. It would relieve many a shirking heart of a load of sin."

"I doubt not the doctrine is liable to perversion. It has nevertheless a spiritual basis. It needs the interpretations of a high,

unselfish nature to justify it in the daily walks of life. I grant one must be dealing with the race in pure love not to miss his way. Swedenborg has said that 'a truth let down from heaven into hell becomes a lie.' I can understand this. It happens every hour."

"But how will you vindicate yourself before the world as an unselfish person?"

"Of course I shall not attempt. It is not for one to do. Settle with yourself as to the fact. Let the world find out at its leisure."

"Will a few believe?"

"If none read your motive aright, by your deed, can you help it?"

"Your no-deed?"

"Either."

"You may die misjudged."

"Not to do so would be to escape wonderfully. Yet there is need of a deeper philosophy of love than we have. It is *God*, — who loves with such an infinite love that he is said to be love itself. His love is wise. He is not a nurse. He does not feed his children with bread. He gives them stones. The stones he gives are better bread than bread itself is."

"Love gives a stone, that it may confer a blessing."

"Often."

"Such a sentiment is far enough from expressing the world's conception of true piety."

"The world is a baby."

“HE REJECTS THE BIBLE!”

WHAT is the precise significance of this phrase? It is important to understand what it really means, since it is freely used by persons of certain theological opinions, by way of reproach against individuals of different theological opinions.

The Bible contains a vast amount of wisdom and truth. Its several parts were written independently of each other, by different persons and at different times, and were afterwards brought together and published under one title by men other than the writers, and not claiming either inspiration or infallibility.

Whatever else may be true of the Bible, the above things are true.

These same things are also true of the work called “The American Encyclopædia.”

If, talking of some statement in the work last mentioned, one should say that he thought that statement incorrect, would this declaration authorize the charge that the speaker *rejected* “The American Encyclopædia;” or that he ignored its teachings, and disregarded its claims?

Plainly, such a charge would be destitute of sense, truth, and reason.

If, however, one declares his dissent from any one of the statements made by any one of the writers in the compilation called “The Bible,” many will be found confidently to say that he ignores the teachings and disregards the claims of that book; or, yet more strongly, that he rejects the book itself.

What occasions the difference of treatment in these two cases?

Why is the right freely conceded me to form and express an independent opinion in regard to one of these compilations, while dissent from any portion of the contents of the other calls forth reproach and contumely, and even pertinacious false statement, from men claiming to be eminently “pious”?

I shall be told, in reply, "The American Encyclopædia" is not infallibly inspired. It does not even *claim* to be so.

I rejoin, Neither does the Bible claim to be infallibly inspired! Certain teachers of religion pretend that that book is, throughout, divine and infallible, and undertake to prove it; but, finding the evidence scanty and insufficient, they introduce into their argument the false pretense *that the Bible itself claims that character for itself*. Yet it nowhere makes that claim.

But they ask, Does not the Bible say that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God"?

No! my friends, the Bible says no such thing; though I doubt not but you sincerely believe it does, since your religious teachers have always imposed this false pretense upon you, from the Sunday school upward.

The Bible does not say this. Not even the New Testament says it.

Paul said it, — I will admit, for the sake of argument, that the text in question is correctly translated, — Paul said it in his second letter to Timothy, and no doubt he firmly believed it. This was the doctrine he had always heard, as a Jew, from Gamaliel and the rest of his Jewish teachers. He believed it, and affirmed it (still supposing that the translation is correct), because he had been educated a Jew. But we, who are not Jews, what is the teaching of Gamaliel to us? Why need Christians care for what Jews, *as* Jews, thought about the inspiration of their Scripture, the Old Testament? Of course the *Old Testament* only is here in question, since the New Testament was not then in existence.

I have been showing incidentally, for the information of my supposed critic, how Paul came to hold this opinion about the Old Testament. But my main point is, that this saying rests on the assertion of Paul alone. No other New-Testament writer is responsible for it: it would be absurd to claim for it the authority of the New Testament itself, which was not then in existence as a whole, and some of the parts of which were yet unwritten; and it would be equally absurd to put forth, *as a claim of the Old Testament*, something not written until centuries after the Old Testament was finished.

In short, this familiar text is not a claim made by the Bible, nor even by the New Testament ; and whoever would show *that the Bible claims for itself that it is inspired* must look elsewhere to find the evidence.

I have given one specimen of the sort of assertion ordinarily presented *as proof* of this point. I now say that all the other passages brought forward as such proof are equally destitute of foundation. The Bible nowhere declares itself inspired, or infallible, or divine, or the word of God, or the obligatory and perfect law given by God for man. All these things have been said *for* the Bible : not one of them is said *by* it.

To doubt, then, or question, or deny, some statement or opinion set forth by some writer in the Old or New Testament is *not* to ignore the teachings of the Bible, or to disregard its claims : it is not to abuse the Bible, or to reject it, or to discredit it, or to fail of proper regard to it as a most precious collection of writings, the history and laws of the two most important religions of the world.

REQUIESCAT.

WE waited for the finger of the Lord
To touch our aching hearts, and give them peace :
We waited for the Heaven-descended word
To bid the life of constant labor cease.

The morning broke in beauty, and it came :
Through earthly death there clove the heavenly birth.
And, as the daylight dawned, another name
Was struck from off the annals of the earth.

Thanks, heavenly Father, that the toil may cease ;
That the loved lips thy praise alone may sing !
On the sweet features lay the perfect peace
That years of life could never hope to bring.

DOES SOCIAL ADVANCEMENT DEPEND UPON POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS?

MAN'S wants and affections are always greater, than, in his individual capacity, he is able to satisfy. This incapacity of the individual to supply his own wants renders it necessary for him to associate, and employ the aid of others, in order to procure satisfaction for his numerous wants and desires : hence association, — society. But, in order to procure the aid of others, he finds it necessary to return to them a satisfactory equivalent for the service rendered him. When he applies his efforts without serving a want, he fails to realize a remuneration or service in exchange ; so with his capital, if he provides what no one wants, his capital is lost : through self-interest, therefore, he will, voluntarily, appropriate his capital and services in supplying the most urgent and numerous wants, so far as his intellect will enable him to discover them, in order to realize his largest remuneration ; and only force or fraud can change this direction.

All honest efforts, whether individual or combined, will thus be directed, voluntarily, in supplying the most urgent and numerous wants of society, and promoting social advancement : therefore any political organization that shall arbitrarily pervert honest efforts and their accumulations from the direction they will take, voluntarily, must inevitably retard social progress.

The political organizations to which reference is here made must be understood as governmental organizations, and that such governmental organizations as history presents are those here considered with reference to social advancement.

All governmental organizations that exercise arbitrary power over honest efforts and their accumulations, and assume control over the person and property of others, divert services and capital from more useful employments, to others less useful, because they transfer themselves, voluntarily, from the less use-

ful to the more useful, through the influence of the larger reward for services thus rendered.

Among the wants to be supplied, voluntarily, I include security of persons and property against violence. Society will, voluntarily, remunerate for services rendered in furnishing protection against violence; but when we give power to those who are to protect us, to compel us to pay, whether they perform the services required or not, we depart from the true means as effectually as a manufacturer would who should give power to his employees to compel him to pay them wages whether the services required were performed or not.

In the sciences and arts, invention and literature, individual genius and effort have always done more to draw the inferior towards the superior, in all that advances our social and material condition, than has ever been done by any governmental organization whatever. When an individual discovers a new machine by which a superior fabric at the same cost can be produced, the inferior must succumb to the superior. When an improved means of conveyance is discovered, the inferior must give place to the superior. Thus competition, free and unfettered by monopolies and subsidies, always elevates the superior over the inferior, and urges on genuine improvement and progress by the most efficient means.

All subsidies, whether to steam lines, railroads, manufacturing establishments, school systems, religious organizations, or political parties, only retards social advancement; because all sums thus transferred are taken from more profitable because more useful occupations, to sustain others less profitable because less useful. Subsidies to steam lines, railroads, manufacturing establishments, and religious organizations, are now almost universally condemned. But subsidies to school systems and political organizations are still among the superstitions of the age. By subsidizing a school system, and the appointment of political partizans to its management, the competition of superior means of education, conducted by others more competent, is prevented: besides, as all taxes lessen the reward of efforts to the extent of the sum taken, the very class intended to be benefited are injured to an extent greater than the advantages realized.

The self-interest of the teacher is not brought into requisition so as to induce him to search for the attendance of every scholar in his district, as would be the case without subsidies and under free competition.

When this government was organized, it rejected the idea of subsidizing a church party. And fortunate would it have been for the American people if they had rejected the idea of subsidizing a political party also ; but this I trust will be the next great stride in social advancement.

A party in power requires subsidies from all,—from those who dissent, as well as from those who consent ; a sum sufficient to enable it to maintain a physical force adequate to suppress all efforts of those who endeavor to disenthral themselves from its arbitrary power. Perhaps the party in power might wish to build a wall around the United States, in order to protect home industry against foreign competition. It claims the right to draw subsidies, in order to carry out its schemes, from those who dissent, as well as from those who consent. But the power thus claimed is usurped : it is not by consent, and, in principle, is no more justifiable than that assumed by a band of bandits on the highway, who assume that their victims consent to surrender their purses when compelled to do so by superior physical force.

We rely upon our police to protect our property against violence ; but, when our property is stolen, we offer a reward or bribe for its restoration. When robberies take place, the police get rewards ; when no robberies take place, they get no rewards : it is for their interest, therefore, that robberies should take place, in order that they may get rewards. But if the organization were a voluntary association, securing pay only when fulfilling the duties assigned them,—or like an express company, which guarantees the safety of packages intrusted to its care,—then, when we pay, it would become the interest of that organization to see that no property was stolen ; for, if stolen, they must either restore it or its equivalent, or lose their occupation. Which system would afford the greater security,—the one the interest of which would be to protect, or the one the interest of which would be that our property should be stolen ?

In applying the voluntary system, as affording the means of

protection against invasion by a foreign enemy, its efficiency is equally clear.

When all forms of taxation shall be removed, and the exchanges of commodities unshackled, then the commerce of our nation will multiply fourfold at least. Four times as many ships will then be required, four times as many ship-yards, four times as much material and machinery in hand suitable for their construction, and four times as many men in employ capable of constructing them, as we now have ; consequently, we shall then have four times the ability to produce, in case of need, such vessels as may be required in order to resist any attempt at invasion that might be made by a foreign enemy. No foreign enemy, however, would attempt an invasion, unless it attempted to exact tribute from us. But the exaction of tribute, not permitted by our citizens, to our own government, would not be submitted to if exacted by a foreign enemy ; and, against such a usurpation of power, the interest and hearty co-operation of every citizen would be enlisted to resist.

In order to aid such advancement, individual and associated efforts build wharves and warehouses, ships and steamers, and send them over the globe, to convey what others desire in exchange for what our own people want. This is done voluntarily. But, when those things arrive to supply the wants of the community, agents of political organizations stand prepared, with armed force, and demand half the value of the things brought, before permission will be granted to deliver them. Voluntary efforts supply the wants. Political organizations, by thus increasing prices, diminish the supply to those who furnish the purchasing power, and apply the half which they thus seize, to the very purpose of maintaining a physical force that shall enable them to perpetuate the power thus usurped.

What we want is freedom and justice, — that is, freedom to do all that we will, provided that we neither trespass, nor induce a trespass, upon the freedom of any other person ; and "justice is a science to be learned, not an arbitrary rule to be made." "The nature of justice can no more be altered by legislation than the nature of numbers can be altered by the same means." Justice is the only sovereign, and freedom the only criterion of

justice: her laws are as immutable as the law of gravitation, and all acts of legislative bodies, that pretend to authorize a violation of freedom, are usurpations.

The only acts of a legislative body that are at all justifiable are those designed to establish rules for the preservation of freedom: but, even for this object, legislation is useless; for each trade and occupation can, for themselves, establish better rules and regulations than can be established for them by legislative bodies.

The greatest happiness of the greatest number requires absolute freedom for all,—not the rule of a majority only. The whole is greater than a part, and any system that attempts to suppress universal diversity diminishes the happiness of a part; and, consequently, the greatest happiness of the greatest number can not be attained without freedom for all.

Nearly all wars, whether religious or political, have their origin in the exaction of uniformity. An attempt to force a uniform faith in religion produces dissent, rebellion, wars. An attempt to force uniform political dogmas produces dissent, rebellion, wars. The conclusion at which I arrive is, that the highest degree of social advancement can only be attained when every one is free to do all that he wills, provided that he trespasses not upon the freedom of any other person, and that the best means of securing this freedom is to allow all honest efforts, freely and voluntarily, to organize and compete for the best means, and the superior will inevitably supersede the inferior.

By this means honest efforts will secure dominion over force and fraud, thereby reversing the existing order, which gives to force and fraud dominion over honest efforts.

NOTES.

THE steps of the theological transition are growing familiar to all. If you attend a little to the different pulpits, not only may you discover who have started, and who have not,—you will pass in review the many befriending ports in which those pastors who are making the voyage to Free Religion have safely arrived. If you ask yourself, "What of the flock?" you may not be able to answer so definitely, because its voice is not heard. But we will suppose that a good part, at least, are awake, and will make the journey successfully with their pastors, and, perhaps, in advance of them.

Having listened a reasonable while to one who is yet laboring with the Mosaic record,—whose "plan of salvation" is "as it was in the beginning, and ever shall be," while he expounds it,—you may leave, and quietly enter another port, where one who has just launched his text, is announcing that "the six days of creation must have been six epochs, for scientific researches prove the world to be much older than our popular chronology asserts." The point here resolves itself into a concurrence of scripture with science. The error simply has been one of interpretation. When the Scriptures are well interpreted, they will be found ever agreeing with all of God's *other* revelations in each department of science. How long this pastor and flock will content themselves with this toil of much reconciliation, we will not stop to predict. Suffice it to believe, that the dull-est wit, once in motion, will perceive this subserviency of Biblical interpretation to the imperious revelations of science is something not at all in keeping with the ancient dignity accorded to the sacred book. The situation of this pastor is not unlike that of Napoleon III., in republican France. The imperial robe falls on other shoulders. He gracefully explains that that is what the empire has meant from the beginning. This concurrence of views augurs well in both cases.

Yet another pastor — whether you chance to hear him or not — is discoursing on “the Human and Divine elements in the Bible.” The errors are human; the truths are divine. How long before his flock and himself will confess that the same may be said of books generally; and then, a step further, see that error is error, that truth is truth, and that one is as *human* as the other?

From another pastor, a goodly flock is receiving the new doctrine of the *at-onement*. “The unity of religion with science and reform” may be the subject. He says, “The vital point in Christ’s system is the full, rounded, perfected character of man ‘Conversion’ is to have Christ’s *mind* and *heart*, or the same as his; that is, your own mind and heart exalted and purified. Christianity is what St. James pronounced it to be, — doing good. To ‘stand up for Jesus’ is to stand up for the *spirit of truth* and for *humanity*.”

Still further on, in a less pretentious edifice, you may listen to one who is saying with great emphasis, as though his feet were at last planted upon the rock he would never leave, “Christ was a man, born and endowed as we all are. He was perfect, not by having miraculous power given to him, but by his obedience to the higher laws of the human nature we have with him in common. He announced the laws for the true life by the clear vision he gained through a faithful experience of it. Thereby he became our leader and exemplar.”

One might roam on and away from the churches now, and discover various little gatherings in upper halls, where very much is said that would be very startling if it were uttered in the great public temples and synagogues. But all here is crude, — the new ideas are not shot forth with precision, winged and brilliant; but it is as if with each explosion the cannon burst. You might find something very like the same, better dressed and less dangerous to your peace of mind, at some Music Hall in a more central part of the city. At some Horticultural Hall you may pause to look at the cream of all this heresy, and wonder, perchance, if, indeed, here is the material out of which you could, in the churn of daily experience, manufacture good, sweet, and wholesome butter, — for we doubt not you have an eye to the *outcome* of it all.

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If, now, you reflect a moment, you discover that the drift of these various intellectual movements is towards a few simple and plain statements of principles, which have, comparatively speaking, been in the world from the beginning. The debate is really on the method of discovery and the method of enforcement. All men agree as to what we call fundamental principles abstractly presented. But whence did they originate? and in what way are they to be made alive in the lives of all men? The first question would not be of so much importance, if the prevalence of the supernatural theory did not involve other errors very destructive to the progress of mankind, by disturbing at the outset, for each and all of its adherents, what they should regard as the true mental method,—the same as is believed to be of service in every other department but that of religion. For this reason, it is of consequence that we come to the decision that moral and religious truths are attainable, the world over, by a direct and simple reference to the facts of life. The world sees how it is at a glance. But it is afraid to believe what it sees. The problem of working up to its vision is so discouraging, involving, as it does, such an utter sacrifice of present semi-prosperous conditions, its timidity implores a "divine assurance." It is as if the world said to the good Deity, "We see : but can we trust what we see? We want to be sure ; we don't want to run risks : for we —

‘ Rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of.’

But, if you will promise us an hundred-fold of increase, we will believe all we see, and suffer until millennial days arrive."

It has been a long while supposed that such an assurance had been given through the medium of the Hebrew race. But now it appears that Deity did *not* interfere, and show Israel a special providence. All we have is the example of a few people who actually believed what they saw, and conformed their lives thereto in an heroic manner. In this light, the imperious alternative, "Believe or be damned," appears as the summing-up of a universal gospel.

Nothing needs to be urged, as regards the method of applying

principles to individual and social life, when the method of their discovery is confessed. "We see, and therefore we obey," might stand for the simple answer. All the social and political problems are unsolvable only because no theory is competent where there is not a concurrence of the material that must be managed. It requires the hand of genius to mold human wills into harmony of action. But then this trouble comes: the unity is short-lived; it cannot be preserved; human wills are perverse; there is no fact at the centre; the principle of gravitation does not inhere in the particles. Well, it is the office of religion to develop such a principle; to encourage a dependence on this unifying *sight*; reveal no selfish private aim, but the goals of humanity, — thither persuading all, as to largest benefit and joy.

THE last number of the "North British Review" contains an exceedingly interesting article on "The Early History of Man." The writer begins by saying,—

Our proposition is, that the antiquity of man is very great; the popular chronology entirely wrong.

This, from a confessedly Orthodox Review, is promising. What shall be said to the following? —

In the latest assault on geological time by Sir William Thompson, the conclusion arrived at, on physical considerations, is, that geologists must continue to confine "all geological history showing continuity of life" within "some such period of past time as ONE HUNDRED MILLION YEARS." The student of human history, regarding man as the latest and highest of organized beings, is disposed to be content with such a slice off the 100,000,000 years as may reasonably be thought to belong to him, and feels that he is nowise greedy when he claims a little more than 20,000 years out of the 100,000,000 as necessary for an explanation of the progress of mankind.

A FRIEND recently overheard, in a public room by the sea-shore, the following portion of a conversation suggested by the „eclipse:” —

"The study of astronomy is a wonderful study."

"Yes, it is."

"But I think it is true, that it *does* have a tendency to unsettle one's faith."

"Yes, indeed ! and it ought to be pursued with great concern."

"WHAT is man, that thou art mindful of him ?" A sublimer faith was that of more modern date, — "Heaven and earth may pass away, but my word shall not pass away."

At the late ordination, in Illinois, of a son of Rev. Edward Beecher, D. D., the candidate was solemnly "charged" as follows : "I charge you never to forget that you are the son of your father, the grandson of your grandfather, and the nephew of your uncle." We have never known any man, who made it his special business not to forget his illustrious ancestors and distinguished relatives, who ever did anything in the world worth remembering. Such recollections are about the poorest lumber a young man can stock his brain with ; and, the more he cultivates them, the less of anything else will grow. Young Beecher had better get his name changed, forget his ancestors, begin anew, and try to be somebody on his own account.

No one has ventured farther in stating the doctrine of self-dependence than the editor of "The Liberal Christian" has done in the above note. Others would have been content to say to young Beecher, "Let your ancestors *rest*." To advise him to "forget" them, is a touch of ingratitude few would be guilty of.

A BOY'S LETTER ON SUFFRAGE.

DEAR MR. EDITOR, — I am twelve years old. I could read well ever and ever so long ago, and can spell almost all the words, and I have been through the big geography, and can sometimes tell where bays and rivers and towns are when my father can't. I hate grammar : it is awful dry. But I have studied it, and can parse. In arithmetic, I have got to compound proportion, and understand all of it so far, except some of fractions. I *kind* of understand these, but some of them make me feel as if I was trying to think with two heads. I know ever so much about American history, and have always been a Republican. I was so glad when the rebels got licked, and so sorry when dear Mr. Lincoln was killed ; and then I was as mad as I could be at Andy Johnson because he *would* be such an ugly old muff ; and, when Gen. Grant was elected, I split my brass cannon with firing it so loud. Now, there

is Ben Coombes : he can just spell out a few words as if all the letters stuck in his throat, and he had to cough them up ; and he gets drunk sometimes, and he lies, and is lazy all the time, and beats his wife, and steals chickens, for he came and killed two of ours, and my father heard him, and jumped up, and saw him running away, and I guess he was pretty well scared, for I found his tracks in the garden, and you never did see such long steps. And he was a rebel too, only he did n't go and fight, and said he was glad that "old Lincoln" was dead. But he votes, and so does Dennis O'Micky, that can't read a word, and he is dirty, and smells so that I don't like to go by him on the sidewalk. And then there are some more of them in our town, and they all vote, and are sure to go to town meeting, and vote bad. And if anybody wants to get up a piece of jobbery, and get the town in debt, and raise the taxes, they will help him ; and then they will come away, and snicker, and say, "It won't cost me nothin' : " for my father heard Jim Bent say so last town meeting after he had voted to do something that would cost a hundred thousand dollars, and do no good ; and he laughed, and seemed to think he had done something mighty nice.

But they won't let me vote, though I know a good deal more than such fellows. Last fall I went to hear Hon. Mr. Splurge at the town hall, and he had a voice as big as a balloon ; and, when I told my father so, he said "Yes, and gas enough to fill it : " and he said that anybody that did n't have a vote was a slave, and when he said so he hollered awfully, and brought down his fist as hard as he could, and hit the corner of the desk, and could n't help making up a wry face. So I laughed. But I don't see why I should be a slave. And they are going to let all the women vote too. I am sure my mother knows a good deal more than ever so many of them that do vote ; for she knows Latin and French very well, and Spanish a little, and a good many other things. But some of the women are pretty mean. Mrs. Crowell chases her boys with the poker, and swears, and says things that I wouldn't say for anything. But if they are all going to vote, and be free, I don't see why I should be a slave. And I told my father so ; and he said, "Quite right, my son : you see we fathers have voted all the property into our own hands, and all the power, and we make you weed the garden when you wish to go and play." And he told me that we boys would never get our rights, and be able to own property, and all that, till we could vote like old folks, and that we would always be oppressed till then ; and then he looked kind of queer, and I rather thought he was making fun. But I don't like to weed the garden, for weeds do grow so fast, and it

does n't seem any kind of use to pull them up; and it is awful dull, especially when I want to go to the pond. And so I want to vote. Besides I don't want my father to have to pay so large taxes; and it must be so provoking when fellows that pay only a poll-tax vote to run the town in debt, and then laugh, and say, "It won't cost me nothin'."

And, besides, Mr. Mooney was at our house the other day, and he is all for women's voting, and he talked about "the fine instincts of women," and said that men did not know how to represent such fine instincts. He used such big words that I could not understand him very well, but a spell afterwards he forgot all about voting, and then he talked about "the fine instincts of childhood," and about a poem called "The Earl King," written by a Mr. Gurter,* and how that showed that older people could not, he said, "enter into the delicate feelings of a child," and I am sure that my papa does n't know how I hate to weed strawberry-beds. And then I thought, that, if children had fine instincts as well as women, nobody could vote for them. And besides my father can't throw any vote for me, even if he knew just how I feel. Jim Bent has no children, and my papa has four: but Jim has a vote, and my father has just one vote, the same as if he had no children at all; and so Jim Bent votes for me as much as my father does. I wish I knew what fine instincts are. I asked Mr. Mooney, and he only scratched his head, and then said something that I could n't understand at all. And then I asked my father, and he laughed a little, and then he said, "You remember, that, when we lived in Hamboro', our clock would n't go, and a man came to the house, and wanted to mend it, and he did n't succeed very well, and came again; and though he had a soft voice, and was very gentle, your mother did not like him at all, and said she was sure he was a rogue. And you remember I was rather offended, and told her it was wrong to think folks bad without cause. And you know, that, after all, he stole our spoons, and we found out that he was a great thief, who went around pretending to mend clocks, and not mending them well, and then coming again and again, until he got at the family silver. Well, I suppose the sort of feeling your mother had, which told her the man was a rogue, was what Mr. Mooney thought of when he spoke of 'the fine instincts of women.'" I cannot write this just as my papa said it, but I remember it pretty well. And I asked him if all women had fine instincts; and he said, "May be some of them don't let them out much, but do with them as your mother does

* No doubt our young friend refers to Goethe, and his poem "The Erl-King." — ED.

with her new dresses, — keep them hung up in the cedar closet.” And then he recited some verses, but I cannot remember them except just the last two lines, which were, —

“So did not carry them about
For fear that they should wear them out.”

This does not sound *exactly* right, but I guess it is pretty near.* So I think my mother has fine instincts; but I don't know that I ever had one, for I liked the clock-mender because he spoke kindly to me, and showed me the wheels when my mother was out, and then wanted me to go into another room and get him a glass of water, but my mother had told me to stay there. But may be my hating to weed strawberry-beds is a fine instinct: at any rate, Mr. Mooney said children had them, and that nobody else could enter into their feelings; and so I think, that, even if they would let my father have a vote for me, I could not be sure he would vote just as I should.

Now, Mr. Editor, I like you, though I think your magazine is pretty dry,† and I wish you would speak to the folks, and tell them to let boys vote. And if you think boys have fine instincts as well as women, and if everybody thinks so, I don't see why you should think that Dennis O'Micky ought to vote, and we not.

HARRY.

M. D. CONWAY is furnishing the readers of “Harper's Monthly” some charmingly written “South-Coast Saunterings in England.” In the number for August he has interesting sketches of some of “The English Communists, the first considerable body in this country who ever professed materialism; and the only party, perhaps, that never possessed it.”

Of this class he writes, —

How little does the world know its debt to such dreamers as they who built Harmony Hall! Palaces are built of mud, by men of mud; but these walls were raised by the lyre of Orpheus.

* “And therefore bore them not about,
As being loth to wear them out.” — ED.

† We trust that our little friend will find THE RADICAL less dry when he has a beard on his chin. — ED.

“ Could I revive within me
 Her symphony and song,
 To such a deep delight 'twould win me,
 That, with music loud and long,
 I would build that dome in air,
 That sunny dome ! ”

The great globe itself, — yea, all which it inherit, — how often have they been melted and changed like wax under the visions of dreamers ! “ Gladdened by that vision, he advanced towards the Pyrenees,” writes Livy of Hannibal and his dream that he had received an envoy from Jupiter. In a dream Cyrus saw the sun at his feet, and tried to grasp it. I own I can never think of the social visionaries — St. Simon, Enfantin, Owen, and the rest — but as the successors of those who by some dream of national grandeur, of nationality, or of religious enthusiasm, have abolished seas and mountains. But for their noble discontent, but for their faith which made impalpable air seem as well worth their money as corn, were there anything left but a mud-ball occupied by — heavens ! by what ? Let one observe, in to-morrow’s “ London Times ” and “ New-York Herald,” the photograph of the world to-day, so far as it is unvisited by any dream of the poor, chaffed, good-time-coming folk. I shall always believe that Mrs. Sigourney had some of the true fire, if only that she wrote, long ago, these lines : —

“ If thou wilt seek the fellowship of dreams,
 And make them friends, they e’en may bear thee up
 From star to star, and let thee hear the rush
 Of angel-wings upon God’s errands speeding ;
 And, while they make some silver cloud thy car,
 Will whispering tell thee that the unslumbering soul
 Wears immortality upon its crest,
 And by its very power to soar with them
 Proves that it cannot die.”

The children of Utopia — they who feed on honey-dew — are, indeed, generally heretics ; but, so long as no bishop has so heavy a cross to bear, let it be remembered that men are to be judged by their fruits, and not by saying “ Lord, Lord,” by formulas the most unimpeachable. One of these dreamers I have read of, who, passing through a crowd, heard one say, “ There goes a man without religion.” He turned, and said gently, “ I have religion enough to pardon your insult.” It is for an Orthodox world — for a society that a little while ago was burning them, and still denounces them — that such men devote all they have and are.

The names of Tom Paine, Robert Owen, or Holyoake are still potent to send the blood to the head of the Orthodox ; but, little as I coincide with their chief negations, I cannot forget the lesson, graven all over the region through which I am wandering, of how the Orthodoxy of one age may leave memorials from which the Orthodoxy of another may recoil. The history of the stake and the fagot should make the Church more modest in its anathemas.

He has something to say of William Allingham.

Allingham is pre-eminently the poet of artists. His exquisite lyrics have suggested some of the finest works of Rossetti, Millais, Arthur Hughes, and others of the same school ; and, indeed, a beautiful edition of his poems, published in 1860, contains fine illustrations by the three artists whose names I have given. Of his shorter poems, "The Touchstone" is undoubtedly the best. It is one of those rare felicities which make up the coronet of thought. In a copy of the poems which I received long ago from the author, I find a verse added in manuscript. The reader may remember the theme of the poem, — a man coming, whence none could tell, bearing a touchstone, whose spell tested all things, smiting the fair to foul, the foul to fair : —

"Of heir-loom jewels, prized so much,
Were many changed to chips and clods,
And even statues of the gods
Crumbled beneath its touch."

The enraged people, seeing their goods brought to naught, imprisoned the man and burned the touchstone ; and the poem, as published, closes with this verse : —

"And when, to stop all future harm,
They strewed its ashes on the breeze,
They little guessed each grain of these
Conveyed the perfect charm."

The verse appended in manuscript runs as follows : —

"North, south, in rings and amulets,
Throughout the crowded world 'tis borne ;
Which, as a fashion long outworn,
Its ancient mind forgets."

But I cannot think this new verse adds to the "perfect charm" of the original conclusion. In 1865 were published Allingham's "Fifty Modern Poems," which have confirmed the opinion of poets and artists that their author is, as a lyric writer, almost incomparable.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES.

THE SEERS OF THE AGES. By J. M. Peebles. Boston: William White & Co. 1869.

Here we have, in truth, a very elaborate work on Spiritualism as it appears to one of the leaders of that popular movement in this country. Apparently animated with the determination to do his subject justice, the author has explored the provinces of philology, philosophy, religion, literature, and magic. Taking Bunsen, Parker, Renan, Max Müller, Swedenborg, Goethe, and many others, as occasional guides, he seeks out and appropriates every item relating to supernatural beings which may confirm his theory thereof. Still, we are compelled to say, — with due appreciation, however, of the scholarship displayed in the work, — that if the author had begun his investigations without his own theory as special interpreter, to whom he has referred all questions raised by his guides for decision, he certainly would have written a different book. In the strangest manner conceivable, he identifies his sensuous spirit philosophy with the purely spiritual philosophy of the transcendentalist, uses the language of both, and incorporates both in his system. Basing his faith on the empirical fact that beings of another sphere do communicate with us mortals, and control our destinies for good or for evil in so far as we co-operate with them, as music varies in harmony according to the skill of the musician and the quality of his instrument, Mr. Peebles begins to interpret the seers of the ages. This great truth, he maintains, has been poured upon the world by spirits from age to age in successive "waves," — the last of which was the "Rochester rappings;" and the one which rolled over the land some two hundred years ago, known as witchcraft, was another, though less successful attempt, of the spirits to reveal their existence to us. Men are the shuttlecocks of good and evil spirits.

The book has six divisions and a preface, — the first, on the "Spirit of the present Age;" the second, on "Ancient Historic Spiritualism;" the third, on "Christian Spiritualism;" the fourth, on "Mediæval Spiritualism;" the fifth, on "Modern Spiritualism;" the sixth, on "Exigetical Spiritualism."

In the first division, the author deplores the theologies, the hypocrisy, and cant, which say so much, assume so much, and do so little withal, and extols the "science of the soul," which, as it is expounded by the Spiritualist, is to be the salvation of all. In the second part, called "Ancient Historic Spiritualism," he gives an account of the Indian, Persian, Hebraic, Grecian, Roman, Egyptian, Chinese, and other versions of Spiritualism. It contains a great number of the anecdotes of ancient authors relative to the experience of the ancients in the way of dreams, visions, worship, etc.,

indicative of the existence of superintending supernaturals. Its object evidently is to imply, if not to prove, that the doctrines and beliefs held by antiquity relative to the immortality of the soul should satisfy all of the truth of the Spiritualism of to-day. Socrates, among others, is quoted as saying much in favor of it. His demon, according to Mr. Peebles, is not his rational self, as we have been wont to think; but a sympathetic, dialectic ghost, that keeps him in the path of rectitude. His figurative language is taken in its literal sense, from a sensuous point of view; and poor Socrates is judged accordingly, with as much success as the interior of a palace is by one who takes a peep in at the back door.

Apollo, and the other gods of antiquity, have a real existence for the interpreter of the seers of the ages; and he looks upon them as the guardian spirits of Greeks and Romans, and not mere ideal conceptions of Divine character, as heretofore wrongly believed by some scholars. We regret to remark that he makes no allowance here for possible optical illusions, the delusions of superstition, and the impositions of priests when their favorite theory is endangered thereby. Are all the legends about Apollo and other gods historical facts? and, even if any of them are, did the gods reveal the idea of the transmigration of the soul?—an idea essentially opposed to modern Spiritualism, and the common propriety of nearly all the nations of antiquity. Is this discrepancy to be imputed to defective mediumship? If so, mediumistic powers keep step admirably with the development of human reason.

Talking of Hebraic Spiritualism, the author intimates that all the parts of the Bible relative to the actual agency of angels, gods, devils, etc., may be true, and denominates all the prophets down to Jesus Christ excellent mediums, Moses alone excepted, who, despite his influence for good on the world, was only second-rate in this respect, and consequently had a second-rate familiar, not at all remarkable for his good nature, known to be the spirit of a coarse Egyptian priest called Gee-ho-ka. Hence the angry, tyrannical deportment of the being called Jehovah in the Pentateuch. Explaining the plagues which Moses brought upon the Egyptian oppressors of Israel, he says that the magicians performed the same miracles by "psychologic law," and would have continued to emulate Moses if he had not descended to the manufacture of lice, a thing which the magicians abominated. This the author states with all the gravity in the world, quite oblivious of the possibility that Judaic dirt may have assisted "psychologic law" to some purpose. "To be sure," Mr. Peebles continues, ascribing scriptural text to Moses' egotism, "Moses said, 'they could not.' But, never charmed with Moses' characteristics, we do not deny his mediumship, nor the truth of his frequent conversations with the Lord God face to face; that is, with his familiar spirit: but we reckon it second-rate to the mediumistic powers of the seers of Egypt and Persia, and immeasurably inferior to that of the Judæan prophets."

In the third part is shown the absurdity of believing in the historical and

theological Jesus of the church, and the propriety of believing in him as an enthusiastic Spiritualist of Judæa. The author succeeds, we think, in demonstrating the absurdity of all three modes mentioned. Here is his version of the death and resurrection of Jesus, based upon the mere letter and interpolations of the New Testament : —

"Forseeing his martyrdom, he is troubled, and, during his prayer, a spirit voice is heard by the listening people, who said that it thundered ; others, that an angel spoke to him. In Gethsemane, and before Pilate, an angel appeared, strengthening him for the ordeal. At his crucifixion, the electro-spirit batteries are strong enough to 'rend the rocks' and the 'veil of the temple from top to bottom.' So potent the influence, so mediumistic the people, they see the spiritual bodies of ascended saints walking in their midst : these 'went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.' An angel rolls away the stone from his sepulchre. The spirit of Jesus appears to Mary, to Peter, and John ; to the disciples on their way to Emmaus, when he expounded to them his mission ; and, at last, 'their eyes were open, and they knew him ; and he vanished out of sight.' Jubilant over the stupendous fact that their divine teacher is yet alive, they return to Jerusalem ; and finding the eleven chosen disciples gathered together, earnestly listening to their happy report of his appearance unto Simon, lo ! the risen 'Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and said "Peace be unto you !" But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed they had seen a spirit.' Psychologically assuming the form of the crucified, he thus showed them his 'hands and feet, and they handled him.'

"From this data of spiritual perception, deepening into clairvoyance and clairaudience, they saw the real presence. Being substantially a spiritual organism, and measurably dependent upon material substance for sustenance, at his request, 'they gave him a piece of broiled fish and an honeycomb ; and he took it, and did eat before them,' — that is, by imbibation, he mediumistically partook of and appropriated their aromal effluence."

What in the name of wonder, I ask, are electro-spirit batteries, psychological transformations, and the mediumistical appropriations and imbibations of the aromal effluence of broiled fish and honeycomb ? The seers of the ages must inform you : I cannot. They will define the moral tendencies thereof.

The fourth part treats of Spiritualism as it existed in the transitional post-apostolic, neo-Platonic, churchianic times. Herein are contained short notices of the lives of those eminent religionists and philosophers whom the author believes to have been mediums ; such as the Christian Fathers, Plotinus, Chrysostom, Porphyry, Proclus, and others. Here we find the same error alluded to in the beginning of this criticism, the error of adapting the transcendental ideas of philosophers to a sensuous Spiritualism. We therefore regret that the author should be so ignorant of metaphysics as to construe the writings of such men as Plotinus and Proclus from a sensuous standpoint. Proceeding to take the testimony of the "churchianic" period

of Spiritualism, he further declares Luther to have been the medium of an iconoclastic ghost who was attached to him by reason of his destructive tendencies. Hence Luther's denial of the alleged miraculous gifts of the then existing Romanism, involving the subsequent skepticism of the Protestants, which still continues, to Spiritualism.

The fifth part, called "Modern Spiritualism," embraces all the peculiar tenets thereof, and contains various passages from many of the great authors of the century, — passages which he assumes to indicate a tendency towards belief in it. Planchette figures conspicuously as a new instrument of communication, crowds of witnesses testify to the alleged facts, hosts of newspapers eulogize the glorious revelations. Here again is the idea of the immortality of the soul, as held by eminent literary and clerical geniuses, used as a testimony in favor of Spiritualism; with what justice the reader of the book must decide for himself.

The sixth and last part contains another exposition of the truths of the Spiritualist, embracing a series of essays on the existence of God, inspiration, faith, baptism, good and evil spirits, hell, heaven, etc. It is clearly written, adapted to the average intelligence, as is indeed the whole volume, is suggestive, and certainly will be invaluable to all who desire a comprehensive statement of Spiritualism as it now exists in our midst. We cannot help, however, expressing a wish that the author had made a distinction between the ideas of the immortality of the soul held by the philosophers, who base their faith upon the idea that time and space have no absolute existence *per se*, and those held by others who make their sensuous experience the measure of their belief. What a minnow in a duck-pond is to the finite world, so, Carlyle intimates in like words, man in his finitude is to the great Infinite; and we think the comparison is just. A minnow, whatever his theory may be, can have as little real knowledge of the meteorological influences that effect his being, as we can have of the infinite universe of which we can only get a hasty glimpse through time and space, very much in the manner of a minnow who thrusts his head above his native element only to draw it back again or perish. Therefore, in all our criticisms, theories, and what not, let us be just, whether they relate to divine essences, psychrometers, popular theologies, psychologies, electro-spirit batteries, or trance mediumistic vociferations and imbibations, etc., or not. A. H. L.

THE WRITINGS OF D. R. LOCKE, — viz., "The Nasby Papers" (including, in book-form, "Swingin' Round the Circle" and "Ekkoes from Kentucky"); also "The White Slave's Story, — A Tale of the First Years of the War."

Half a dozen years ago, at the West, a young fellow of thirty, a printer by trade, but "Bohemian" and "local" when occasion favored, started the letters of "Petroleum V. Nasby." It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that the unique character then thrown into literature is now about as well known throughout the United States as any writer, statesman, or soldier in

the land. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine the "Postmaster of the Corners" as anything else than the most real of flesh and blood. The fictitious Democrat has become a part of history.

And now, also, it is everywhere understood that the man behind the scenes, the author of this huge joke, is Mr. D. R. Locke, one of the editors and proprietors of "The Toledo Blade." His weekly journal has grown into a circulation claimed as nearly second to that of "The Tribune," chiefly through the publication of the "Nasby" articles. During the past year or two, the sovereign people have insisted on looking into the man's face; and, having summoned him to the lecture-stand, he has traveled extensively, and seen the world—at a hundred and fifty dollars a night. Concerning the "capchus adviser," who sees no occasion for publishing the "Ekkoes from Kentucky," Rev. "P. V. Nasby" may well enough ask, "Did he see the state uv my pants? Did he observe the wreckt condishun of my boots? Is he aware that I am in arrears for board?" But, as for *Mr. Locke* of "The Blade," that gentleman must certainly be "comfortable" in the matter of worldly goods.

His success has been rapid and complete. But it is no marvel, no result of chance or public whim. Much less is it founded, as some innocent pedants fancy, on any depraved taste that delights in the mutilation of English, and would sink the artist in raising the clown.

True, the age delights in fun, and all sorts of it are in market. The American minstrel, in burnt cork, is the hero of crowds, and has made his fortune. "Mr. Punch" of London is the foremost peer of the British realm. In Paris, royal is Offenbach; for he has dug up the ancient Duke of Brabant, and set him to singing of gripes in the bowels, and to crowing the strains of an amorous chanticleer. With *opera bouffe* and the *can-can*, *M'lle Toste* may suggest the Worship of Priapus to the Christians of 1869, and the Fifth Avenue will applaud if only a laugh is produced with sufficient frequency. Artemas Ward became our national showman, greater than Barnum, by exhibiting his "wax figgers" to the "mind's eye" alone. And, just now, an accomplished scholar, Mr. Leland, awakes of a morning at the top of his fame, on the strength of "Hans Breitmann," the German "bummer" of broken English and unbroken thirst, who marches to the sea with Sherman, and solves the infinite "ash von edernal sphree!"

The universe, we are told, rests on the law of opposites. Is the old face, then, seen glancing through all this rollicking and burlesque of the time? Ancient Christendom held carnival with no misgiving. Protestantism was more serious from the first, as heads that were dodging the axe could spare a pleasantry. The Puritans harrowed every pucker out of jollity, and then founded the institutions of the United States. Their descendants, while dropping the parental narrowness, have been as solemn and persistent,—the agitators, religious innovators, moral reformers, and physical regenerators. Dreadfully in earnest,—and with sufficient need,—they have preached abolition, temperance, non-resistance, rationalism, woman's rights,

and all other rights and wrongs. War, too, has lanced and blistered the nation. The results have been grand in all directions. But is the "Soul of the World" a little tired of its high flights and long strain? Perhaps. Well, the old globe is green and gay: let her roll a bit for fun.

Still, even the best *jokes* must serve the Lord; and, when wit is the minister of justice and truth, the "eternal verities," in return, will not allow it to be forgotten. And, just here, the thinker must insist on looking at Locke. For "Rev. Petroleum Vesuvius Nasby" has been the efficient pastor of an immense flock, to whom he has always taught—however indirectly—the Ten Commandments and the Golden Rule. Thus he has "hitched his plow to a star:" his fun rests on an idea, and moves with the humanity of the age.

These letters of his, written for to-day, are not of to-day only: they cannot die with the first reading. Artemas Ward may easily enough retire from view,—not that his wit is poor, but that the showman's travels are mostly based on the breadth of one individual's boots. But "Nasby"'s venerable feet must stand ridiculous long in the future, as the ground on which they are planted is sacred forever in the history of the human race. "Uncle Tom's Cabin" is the one American novel; for it pictures America's greatest crime. So the "Nasby Letters" are the one rough gallows in literature, from which slavery last confesses the unpardonable sin, as it falls through the trap of satire, hanged until dead.

Of course art in a book is much, or the book is nothing. Observation, imagination, and reason, must furnish adequate clothes for the grandest idea. But Locke has every requisite for his vein. His two eyes are microscope and telescope to all current political phenomena. The optic of fancy is no less open and ready, whether in broad daylight or in Nasbian dreams. It is not subject to moon-stroke, certainly: it is always turned to the solid earth. But there are the things it has use for. Silver rays may do for a poem, but not for a caricature. The scene in which "Mr. Nasby" visits the grave of his old friend "John Guttle," and beholds the results of amalgamation in a sisterly fight, is only one of many "studies from nature," all equally rich: but the veteran doughface, standing there and trying to weep, yet remembering the patriarch's whisky, and only able to moisten at the mouth, and spit, is a picture too grotesque for any one but Locke; while it shows a hand as masterly as that of Dickens, or of any other laughter alive. In the same way, "Joe Bigler"'s problems in arithmetic might easily stand for the force of "Nasby"'s logic, although by no means the most striking instance, and only that which here first happens to present itself. But this power of reasoning is unmistakably his "best holt." It is evinced equally well in a hundred letters. It is a very thunderbolt, riving everything before it,—the last terror that has flashed through comedy. As far as the "human understanding" is concerned, this man is entitled to the name of Locke.

Then his diction, which culture sometimes affects to snub. Is it really

out of taste? In the days of Pope, with rhymes "fit for the frosting of cake," the taste of Shakespeare was in a way to be pitied. But the one poet as wise as nature would arrange that fools should talk as fools; and the strongest American satirist means that the windy Southwestern Democrat shall "orate" with about such tongue as the creature daily wags.

Yes, the "Nasby Letters" are not only smart,—a good editorial and business speculation,—but they are sufficient to stand as the pedestal of greatness. They are "nonsense;" yet so excellent, and with such a vast moral effect, that Ericsson, conceiving the "Monitor," has accomplished no better or more practical work. In them, probably, Locke has done his best, and will live his longest. They will answer, at any rate, for one man to rest on, wearing the laurel.

But the Western editor is a young man yet, and may easily live to double his years. He cannot sit down idle, at eight-and-thirty; and, in addition to the *role* of the great office-holder, he has taken up the pen of the novelist, and written a story for his "Blade" in plain English. He calls it "The White Slave's Story,—A Tale of the First Years of the War." At the outset, the renowned "Nasby" is reduced to small capitals, and D. R. Locke steps to the front without mask or shadow.

His immense reputation has doubtless caused thousands to watch him intently in his new endeavor. A Slave's Story—and from him—seemed to promise success in its very announcement. The field for incident was fresh; as "Uncle Tom's Cabin" left the "patriarchal institution" in all its strength, implying only, by the monster revealed, that so hideous a thing must be hacked to death if God's justice were more than a farce. Where Mrs. Stowe ended, Locke began. The crack of the rifle and boom of the cannon were heard in the distance; and the Slave's Revenge loomed up, dim of outline, but ghastly and certain.

Mr. Locke's story is already complete. Has it fulfilled its promise? Yes, all direct promise, certainly; for it was given to the public with little noise and no pretension. As a short novel for "The Toledo Blade," nothing could be better. In this respect, it may have precisely served the writer's purpose. Still, it appears to evince his ability for a greater task, rather than exhaust the possibilities of his subject.

The Slave during the Rebellion—patient, brave, self-sacrificing, and with an instinctive faith keener than his master's intelligence—this humble hero has not yet called forth the pen that must some time portray his deeds. But "The White Slave's Story" cannot have failed to interest the general reader, and to increase his joy that the old horrors of a barbarous South can never again be real. Nor can the brief tale in "The Blade" fail to show that no child's play need be expected, in any department, from that powerful hand that grasps the "Nasby" pen. Nor, again, will any airs be in order regarding style.

An occasional sentence appears, evincing less the elaboration of the professor than the despatch of the editor. But this is in keeping with the

character portrayed, who has wrung even his strength of speech from conflict with bondage, the lash, and a broken heart. Besides, Locke is really a little impatient with "fine writing." He knows that verbiage is worse than waste, and that sentiment easily sinks into snivel. With him, all must be clear, direct, and loaded. "I was born a slave. My mother was a slave, and her bondage was my inheritance." So rings the sentence that opens his story.

But, in "Nasby" 's lecture on "Cursed be Canaan," there was a gigantic figure of speech relating to some men who would "garrote the Goddess of Liberty, to steal the white robe she wears." All these chaps—and occasionally others who ought to know better—have too delicate a stomach for Locke. Well, they have a right to die in their wisdom, believing him an "accident in letters," and not one of the ablest representative men of the Western Continent.

E. H. G. C.

THALEIA. Woman: her Physiology and Pathology, in connection with Maternity; with Hygienic and Medical Directions. Also the effects upon offspring of temperamental incompatibility between parents; with the laws of true physiological reproduction, and directions for the subsequent management of children. With an appendix containing medical and dietary formulas, and a chapter on the cerebellum. By Mrs. T. H. Keckeler, M. D. Cincinnati: A. T. & T. H. Keckeler. 1869.

The authoress has made a happy selection of a very appropriate and comprehensive name for a work of this character. The Greek word "Thaleia" means "womanhood," or, in a general sense, "whatever pertains to woman."

Here is a practical work by a practical woman. To use her own prefatory words, she has been prompted to give such a synopsis of the results of her own study, observation, and professional experience, as she feels is needed and will be appreciated by the wives and mothers of the land.

The subject of the physiology and pathology of woman in her maternal relations is presented in a manner at once brief, devoid of technicality, and abounding in physiological knowledge. No woman need fear her ability to comprehend its pages, and its careful perusal will bring to every thinking woman clearer and higher ideas of her duties and rights in regard to parentage.

The authoress distinctly urges the proposition, that health and capacity for mature age are among the *natural* rights of woman; and that those who do not possess these blessings owe their misfortunes, in a great degree, to parental or personal disobedience of physiological law. She points out, in a manner that cannot be misunderstood, some of the most important of these disobediences, tracing results back to causes, and explains how such unnatural results may be avoided, and the extent and manner of relief of which they are capable.

The relations and duties of parents towards progeny in a *physiological*

sense are forcibly expressed: "There is not a vice or a virtue, a defect or a perfection, whether physical or mental, in parents, which may not be transmitted to progeny, either as an organic condition, or an organic liability; and these conditions and liabilities are the sum of a child's inheritance when it commences its earthly life. No idiotic, imbecile, deformed, feeble, or sickly child ever came into existence except through an adequate parental cause, and the responsibility for such unfortunate results is directly traceable to the parents. 'By their fruits ye shall know them,' applies to the physical nature as well as to the moral, and such poor fruits as society sometimes and so abundantly gathers demonstrates something radically wrong in the progenitors. 'As ye sow, so shall ye reap;' and those parents who reap through progeny only disease, deformity, ingratitude, sin, and early death, should take the injunction home to themselves, and not loosely charge the results upon God and accident."— p. 71.

The subject of the natural rights of woman relative to maternity is presented from a woman's point of view, and most reasonably and truthfully expressed. We think no tenable objection can be raised against her views.

The chapters upon the special physiology of the female, and the physical derangements to which she is peculiarly liable, are comprehensive and instructive. Attention to what is therein taught would save many a girl from much sickness, suffering, and doctors' charges.

The whole work is devoted to the interests and instruction of woman in her relations of wife and mother, and to the interest of children, and should be in the hands of every family in the land. It is not a work of mere formulas and recipes, but is full of practical knowledge and earnest thought upon subjects which are of vital interest to the race.

The authoress has dedicated her work to Miss Harriot K. Hunt, M. D., of our city, a lady long and favorably known in our midst as a pioneer among her sex in the practice of medicine.

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